

"AIRSHIPS AND THE SOUL OF MAN"—BY RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

VOL 31 NO 3

JULY  
1910

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# THE SMART SET

A MAGAZINE OF CLEVERNESS

THE  
BEST  
WORK  
of

Julian Hawthorne,  
John Kendrick Bangs,  
Katharine Metcalf Roof,  
Margarita Spalding Gerry,  
Thomas L. Masson,  
John Carter,  
Reginald Wright Kauffman.

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PARIS

# SUMMER NUMBERS of THE SMART SET

WE have planned the summer numbers of the SMART SET with extraordinary care. They represent our very best work. They are the best numbers we have issued this year.

When this July table of contents was prepared, someone, peering curiously over our editorial shoulder, said it looked to him like a "pippin" number—the finest line-up of interesting features, that he had ever seen in any fiction magazine. Were we unduly elated? That's what we aimed to make this issue—and we felt that we had not altogether failed.

Blowing our own horn? Well, we're working to give you the best vacation reading you've ever had. If you are pleased, write and tell us about it; it'll tickle us to death. You've no idea how a little encouragement lightens the editorial burdens when— Oh, well, write and tell us what you think, anyway.

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**ELLIOTT FLOWER'S** "The Wife That Was," a story of a return from Reno.

**MRS. JOHN VAN VORST'S** exquisite paraphrase of a famous love story, "His Own Cyrano."

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**OLIVIA HOWARD DUNBAR'S** "Dulce Et Decorum," an intense story of unappreciated patriotism.

**JOHN KENDRICK BANGS** in his happiest mood, in a satirical essay, in which he contends that Americans as a race are too modest and retiring.

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Vol. XXXI

No. 3

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A MAGAZINE OF CLEVERNESS

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# THE LAST CASTLE

By MARGARITA SPALDING GERRY

## PROLOGUE

**T**HREE were few sounds about the old chateau; and those heard were the tranquil, reassuring utterances of growing, creeping and fluttering things. A bird chirped now and then; a breeze brought a full chorus from the tree leaves in their first green; there was the song of running water, so constant that it seemed no sound.

No other dwelling was in sight. In front of the chateau, at the bottom of a slope of fine, close turf, lay the river. Under the windows of the right wing was a flower garden, as yet all in green, hidden from the road by a high box hedge. The road, in its turn, was quickly hidden from the chateau by its own windings. Beyond the high-pointed windows of the little Gothic chapel stretched a forest. Orchards, drifted over with white and pink, were back of the low tower of the medieval keep which was the heart of the chateau. And whether villages or wildernesses were beyond, outside of the orchard scents and glimpses, just beyond the turn of the road, continuing the shadows of the park, not even the birds circling high above the trees on early housekeeping errands could tell.

It was a place to be glad in; or, joy failing, it was a chateau from which any man should be able to accept the brightening day with peace. The beauty all around was so young, so expectant, that it summoned any soul that might be behind closed doors and shuttered windows to come and be

young and to expect with it. Yet for a long time the silence was so unbroken by sounds of human life that, were it not that the trimness, the cleanliness everywhere spoke of preparation for a master's eye or the desire to please a mistress, the place would have seemed forsaken.

At last the shutters of a window overhanging the garden were thrown open—then after a time another. One by one, at intervals that spoke of slow steps between, the windows were raised to the air and the sunshine. Not one was forgotten; even at the top of the chapel clerestory, dusky triangles of stained glass were pushed outward. Through these branches in the armor of secrecy of an old chateau the sun of a May morning streamed in. Everywhere lights from old brass and polished wood gleamed out in reply.

High in the round tower of rough hewn gray stone the last window opened. Slowly, painfully, a white-capped head emerged. It was so old, so brown, so wrinkled that, had it not been for the covering of sun-bleached linen, it might have seemed a fancy of the builder held in the stone in which he worked.

The sunlight caught a hidden gleam at the bottom of deep set peasant eyes. The woman leaned far out. She strained her eyes up and down the river, through the denseness of the forest shades, past the windings of the road, into the sweetness of the flowering orchards. A long time she hung there, her look haunting the road. But at last she turned away.

July, 1910—1

## THE SMART SET

The hundred eyes of the old chateau took up the burden of her quest, and searched and waited.

## I

SINCE it was before the days of motor cars when M. de Montville and his old valet, Pierre, came to the Canadian health cure at Sainte Valerie, they were driven from the station in one of the hotel surreys. The road was a long one and winding. As Pierre watched the interminable greenness, the trees at every turn threatening to overflow the narrow lane down which they sped, he sighed. It was far, so far, from the city and the shops. And—oh, so drearily distant from Paris and from Lanaraïs! Pierre turned to his master. Since they were alone, save for the driver beside whom the valet sat, he would permit himself to speak without being first addressed.

"M'sieur Jean," he said plaintively in their own tongue, "why is it that we come to this place?"

De Montville, gazing straight ahead with dull, black eyes, laughed wearily.

"Why did we come to Montreal? It was for the same reason—that it was a place to go. And after this is the United States, where we have not yet been—and South America—and perhaps after that the Northwest—"

Pierre shivered.

De Montville laughed again, but this time kindly.

"But we forgot the waters, my Pierre. It is for them that we have come, is it not?—the waters of Sainte Valérie that are to give us everything—even youth!"

He lapsed into silence again and sat absently watching the road.

It was not long before the sound of running water broke pleasantly into the summer afternoon. Through a gap in the trees De Montville saw a swift flowing stream. His eyes brightened and he leaned forward eagerly. But the greenness again hid it from view. Patiently he waited until a sudden turn again brought it into sight,

broadened into a miniature bay, filled with little eddies and rapids.

"It's the *'tite rivière'*," said the driver, turning to M. de Montville a broad Irish smile. But he turned back blankly. It was evident that the Frenchman neither saw him nor heard.

The clustering, glossy green, the mysteriously hidden road that played at hide and seek with the river, the call of the unknown that had never failed to draw him, carried him in thought back to a world that wore the familiar beauty of the old chateau—misted with his boyish dreams—green to the river, and there translucent ripple, green from forest to sky line—the winding road and the orchard—billows of white and pink—peopled with the magical beings of romances and of his own imaginings.

Pierre felt the silence, and gave his master a quick glance over his shoulder:

"Behold!" he said to himself. "He dreams!" Then he applied himself to conversation with the driver. The talk flowed on uninterruptedly in broken English and Kerry brogue.

De Montville was lost in the vision that was never far away from him.

*He was following a road that wound and climbed and descended through greenness. There was always the murmur of a little river, sometimes faint when it flowed away from the road and away until it could be marked only by the line of denser green that bordered it, sometimes loud when it clamored again into view. He was desolate when it left him and joyous when it appeared—and always seeking its mystery. He was seeking something else, too, which lay always just beyond the horizon line. . . .*

The surrey stopped suddenly before the wide piazza of a great summer hotel. A woman who was leaning over the railing scanning the latest arrivals with lazy interest gave De Montville a glance from bright eyes half closed. Before he answered it, De Montville turned to look for the river, hidden, all but one bright glimpse, by the red brick expanse of the hotel. Then he sought the woman. His eyes were

alive now; but the light that was in them when they brooded over the river and when they answered the provocative challenge of the woman on the piazza was not the same.

"My Pierre," said De Montville coaxingly when he stepped out of the carriage, "it is that we are going to like this Sainte Valerie, is it not?"

## II

PIERRE was slipping noiselessly along the hotel corridor. Mrs. Jamison stopped him. She was a short, thick-set woman, and was dressed with mathematical precision.

"Where is M. de Montville?" she asked.

"He is in the dance, madame."

Mrs. Jamison made no move to go. M. de Montville's whereabouts were not what she wished to find out. Had she not seen him, not five minutes since, with Mrs. Shearer?

"Your master is well pleased with the waters at Sainte Valerie, is he not?" she suggested ingratiatingly.

Pierre gave her a quick look. "M. de Montville amuse' himself well, madame," he replied with perfect courtesy. "The waters also are admirable."

The lady sacrificed a smile. "I should be afraid he would be lonely sometimes for his home and his kindred. He has been away a long time, has he not?"

"From Paris five years, from the chateau ten. My master love' much to voyage."

"How could he bring himself to leave Paris and come here? For Canada seems barbarous to you French people—from France, I have been told," she said with laborious playfulness. "Although you take such good care of him that I am sure he hardly misses his home."

The man estimated her shrewdly. He understood that he would have to tell her something:

"We love much the chateau—and Paris also—we of De Montville. Lanarais is mos' beautiful; she is mos' old. Before the Terror the family was of the

*haute noblesse*. But since that time they have refuse' to be name' as they should. It is that my master like much to know how are the people here, everywhere. I think my master make a book some time—" He surveyed innocently the reception of his bulletin. It was satisfactory. "My wife—Marie was the *bonne* of M. de Montville—wait for us in the old house. It is always ready. She like to stay. Me, I like to voyage—like my master."

There was a suggestion in Pierre's manner that no more information would be dispensed. Mrs. Jamison turned away, only half satisfied.

A tall woman was coming down the hall. She bore herself stiffly and walked with the aid of a cane. When she perceived Mrs. Jamison in conversation with the valet she smiled scornfully. Yet there was a suggestion of curiosity in the passing glance.

"Mrs. Benson"—Mrs. Jamison hurried to her—"are you looking for Mr. George? I saw him a few minutes ago on the piazza—with Margaret Dale."

"You are very kind, Mrs. Jamison," replied Mrs. Benson pleasantly. "But I do not need my son."

As soon, however, as the other lady had turned the corner of the hall, Mrs. Benson went downstairs with the piazza in view.

Pierre, when both were out of sight, allowed himself a smile. Then he waved the excellent Canadians out of his consciousness with a motion of his expressive hands and opened the door of M. de Montville's suite.

On the great east piazza the twilight was still bright, although the lamps in the ballroom were already lighted. At one end of the piazza were the musicians screened by palms, at the other a mass of azaleas, white and pink. The azaleas were vigorous; they had grown to the height of a man's shoulder. When the green tubs were hidden it seemed that the great summer barrack had admitted an advance guard from the forest legions. For the forest lay all about.

The boy and girl, who had drawn

## THE SMART SET

their chairs as near to the azaleas as they could get them, belonged to the forest and the azaleas and the fresh evening air. Clear-skinned, fresh-lipped, bright-eyed both, and, boy as well as girl, as white of costume and as pink of cheek as the flowers behind and around them.

"Why don't you dance?" asked the girl.

"Dance!" exclaimed the boy. "When one can be out here?" He had the intolerance for hot ballrooms woman-ruled that belongs to his age and his temper.

"But I shall have to go in soon. It doesn't seem quite fair to sit out dances with someone else when you have promised. And I have promised to dance the next one."

"Who is it?" he asked quickly.

"Will MacDonald. And this one will be over in a few minutes."

"I don't mind him."

"But I wish you would dance. I—don't like to leave you out here alone."

"Dancing is a senseless sort of thing. But if you tell me to, I'll go find someone." Then, as her face fell at that, he became suddenly joyous. "No; I know a better way. I will come in there and dance—with you. May I? Will these do?"—with a glance at his flannels.

"Half the men don't dress for the dances. And I like you—that way." There was a moment's pause. "I hope mother won't mind."

"Why should she?" he demanded haughtily.

"I don't know—but I always seem to be doing the wrong thing. It's very puzzling. Why did you ask me to go rowing with you last night?" She turned on him suddenly.

"Why?" George Benson tried to look surprised and succeeded in looking guilty.

"Mother scolded me about it when I went upstairs."

"I don't know what right she had to do that," he began indignantly. Then, being a well bred lad, he was shocked at his rudeness. "I didn't know it was so late—really I didn't;

and I didn't know there was anything out of the way in our going."

"You know now," she said, reading his countenance with sternness.

Abasement spoke in his gruff tones: "My mother—said something to me about it."

"Oh!" Margaret, in painful sympathy for his evident humiliation, found nothing else to say.

It was while they sat in silence that De Montville came out on the piazza for a breath of air. He had Mrs. Shearer on his arm. De Montville was not of those men who lounge into even a provincial ballroom in tennis flannels or dinner coat. He wore proper evening clothes. The Frenchman was talking animatedly with gesture, as they approached Margaret Dale and young George Benson in their azalea corner.

Mrs. Shearer saw them first. She observed the blond young Englishman and was preparing to smile at him. Then she felt the arm of the man she was with start under her own. He stopped. Mrs. Shearer looked at him with amazement. And well she might; she had seen many moods upon his face. But neither she nor anyone else at Sainte Valerie—unless it were Pierre—had seen De Montville while he dreamed.

The clustering, glossy green, the snow of pink and white, the girl fresh and morning-faced, brown and rose-flushed, the clear eyes of the young man beside her, the youth who was beautiful like the seeking prince in the story—what never wholly banished longings did they not awake in him?

. . . At last, when the river and the road stretched side by side, a castle loomed before him, shapely and huge. The music from within floated out to him and he entered. There, holding high revel among her knights and ladies, was a princess. Before he reached her she held out her arms to him and smiled. When he . . .

"M. de Montville," said a voice from far off, "the music is beginning. Shall we dance?" It was Mrs. Shearer who spoke. She was smiling at him archly.

Mrs. Shearer was a handsome woman, with a curved mouth and bright eyes half shut.

De Montville pulled himself together. The picture by the azaleas was being disturbed. An indistinct young man was offering his arm to the girl. Mrs. Benson had come to claim her son. De Montville and Mrs. Shearer moved off. De Montville was careful to make all the necessary replies. But under the realization of the moment lay his dream.

*. . . When he had clasped her and touched her lips he turned and fled. As he left flames sprang up, and when he looked back there was a heap of ashes where the castle had been. He sped, driven on his quest. And many castles sprang up before him out of the dust of the wayside—for his road now lay through an arid waste—and always a princess smiled at him within the hall—until he reached each castle with weariness and left it with hatred. And when he looked back at the ashes his heart felt like ashes in his breast.*

*The last castle rose out of the dust of the highroad . . .*

"Who is the young lady by the azaleas?" De Montville spoke suddenly.

Mrs. Shearer opened her eyes.

"That is little Margaret Dale," she said sweetly. "I think she may be rather a pretty girl some day."

"Marguerite—Dale?" De Montville repeated questioningly to himself. "I had not really seen her—before."

### III

THE floor was fairly well filled with dancers forming for the next "set." They still danced "sets" at that time at Sainte Valerie. De Montville observed, as he entered, what always impressed him anew, the difference in type of these people from their social counterparts elsewhere. The blond Englishman, the red or black Scotchman, the Irish girl with eyes like fringed gentians and blue-black hair—one saw them everywhere, but not of so primitively fresh a type. For there

was a young vigor in these Colonials which spoke of wider spaces and more frequent contact with the wilderness than their Old Country prototypes. There was also an absence of complexity which made for untroubled foreheads and frank laughter. There had been times when De Montville had sighed for someone who could speak his language. Tonight he found the ignorance of it charming—in young Canada on the dancing floor. As for the matrons—he caught an inquisitive glance from Mrs. Jamison, who sat by the wall. And he shrugged his shoulders impertinently at the thought of her.

It was the waltz quadrille that was to follow. De Montville learned that it would be necessary to waltz not only with one's partner but with every lady in the set. Entering the room late as they had, and delaying with his abstraction, De Montville and Mrs. Shearer took their places in the first set where there was a vacant place. The musicians began to play almost immediately. De Montville was wondering why it was that the simplicity of the younger girls must harden into the narrow conventionality of the British descended matron—then he realized that he was dancing opposite Margaret Dale.

Margaret had not been so tardy. She had been aware at the instant of his approach, aware and startled. She knew it meant that she would have to waltz with him. Only the fact that he had never approached her or said a word to her had prevented Margaret from being afraid of the Frenchman. For she had heard things said about him. The ladies, some of the girls even, had talked about him. They said that he had left Paris because his evil name had forced him into exile; that it was a disgrace to the management at Sainte Valerie that he was there. The matrons said that no girl should be allowed to dance with him; the girls asserted loudly that nothing would tempt them to do so. Margaret had been too much absorbed to notice that, where he had invited, De

Montville had not been refused. But to the girl who had listened with averted eyes and shocked color it was very terrible. All the more terrible because she had not the vaguest notion of what they meant. But it was at least clear that M. de Montville was not a good man, and a girl ought not even to talk with a man who was not good. She was not sure whether it was right even to be polite to persons of whom you were thinking harshly.

The waltz quadrille was a crisis. If the ladies had said that no girl ought to dance with him, if the girls had said they would not dance with him, she ought not to do it now. But how could she help it? It would be dreadful if—

M. de Montville did not look like a bad man this evening, she observed with distress; he did not even look old. He met her eyes once or twice, and his eyes were gentle. It was hard to know what was right to do. At school everything had been so plain. One thing was right, another thing was wrong; there had been no doubt at all. But here—Will MacDonald was bowing to her.

There was no time to ask her mother—and—somehow—even Mrs. Dale's opinions often cost Margaret much puzzled thought. Would he understand? Would it hurt his feelings? Here she had to waltz with Mr. Langley. Why wasn't everyone as nice as Mr. Langley, so that one could know what was right to do?

It had come. M. de Montville bowed. There was a queer eagerness in his face. Margaret stood still and looked at him gravely.

"I don't care to dance, please," she said.

De Montville understood. His comprehension of women extended even to this girl who, now that she had spoken, lost all her pretty color and looked ready to cry. Nothing else could have made him see so clearly what he seemed to her. White stripes came out on his cheeks; he put up his hand instinctively to feel where he had been lashed. He trembled; the room swung. Then he remembered that there were other people.

He could feel the curious glances that were beginning to discover them. He bowed and bent over her with solicitude, exaggerated so that it could be seen from a distance.

"You are not well?" he murmured. He was careful not to give her time to reply. "May I not conduct you to your seat?" Although she shook her head, he offered his arm to her with insistence. He held it so until he was sure that all the room had seen. Then, again bowing gravely, he watched with her the dancers who brushed against them.

When he had arranged that no one should understand that he had been rebuffed, he had time to think. Strangely enough, the knowledge that the girl had judged him gave him now neither anger nor shame. It brought him, instead, to the vantage ground of her honest youth, from which she had been able to turn on him grave eyes with wonder in them and grief. De Montville felt the sterile custom of his life breaking into shapes of belief, of ardor, long unused.

But for Margaret her station by his side, in the midst of a room full of motion, was a pillory. She had caught the look in his eyes, black under the white hair; she had seen the white lines on his face. She had suffered with the consciousness that she had made him suffer. His quick command of the situation made her feel how crude, how insolent had been her action. She felt at once grieved and shamed that she had insulted a man who had been able to show her how rude a child she had been. When her partner came back to her she shook off his questions impatiently. She could not raise her eyes to De Montville.

But De Montville's eyes were far away. He did not hear Mrs. Shearer when she spoke.

. . . *The last castle rose out of the dust of the highroad. He knew it was the last. It rose, shapely, and glowing with color, the slender towers flushed with rose, for they were of crystal and the dawn passed through them. It was so beauti-*

*ful and so mystical that wonder awoke within him again. And he entered eagerly. . . .*

## IV

A CLEAR, low whistle startled George Benson. He looked up. Almost above him, in a tree which slanted across his path, was a vision of rose color and brown. He climbed. It was a scrubby little tree that stood with its feet in the winding river. In deference to the invalids who frequented the health cure, there were slats nailed up the mild ascent. When he was fairly among the branches, a tiny seat for two beguiled to conversation. Benson scorned the seat and sat astride a limb. Margaret settled her crisp print skirts with content.

"I did want to talk to you so much," she began.

"What's up?"

"I am afraid I have done something dreadful." She paused. "Have you seen M. de Montville this morning?"

The boy gave her a look of hawklike directness. "What have you to do with M. de Montville?" he demanded.

"Oh, nothing—that is, you won't think it anything. I was—rather rude to him last night—and he was—queer. It worried me all night. But then I didn't sleep very well last night." Her tone was apologetic.

"I won't have you give that man a thought, Miss Dale." The careful formality of the title was in odd contrast to the unconscious masterfulness of the tone. "It's indecent for him to intrude himself on you. There are enough other people here. A man like that!"

His indignation jarred on Margaret's memory of De Montville's face:

"It's only that I seem to be always making mistakes. I haven't done one thing right since I came here."

"Oh, yes, you have," he began, and halted.

"Do tell me; it would do me good to know."

His face became red with the agony of expression:

"You've made it jolly for me. Until

you came I thought I would go mad at this water drinking place. My mother pulled me here—the rest of my fraternity are camping on the lakes up in Matawan and the trout are swarming there. And—and—I think we are pretty good friends already, don't you, Miss Dale?" He stumbled over the words. Something of the glamour of the night before hung over him and gave what he said new meaning. And yet in the daylight he was self-conscious. The words seemed to him shamefully sentimental.

Margaret put out her hand boyishly. "Indeed, we are," she said. But when his hand met hers, she, too, blushed. She went on hastily: "I don't know what I should have done here without you. Nobody else understands. I shock mother all the time. She was vexed with me again last night about M. de Montville and you—"

"Me!"

"She said I ought not to have sat out that dance with you on the piazza—"

"There isn't anyone else here fit for you to talk with," he muttered.

"She said that I had been unpardonably rude to M. de Montville."

"A Canuck!" he growled.

"He isn't Canadian French; he is French from France," she flamed out. "Not that I care—only, I don't like to have anyone misunderstood. You were out of the room when they danced the waltz quadrille. It was just after we were out on the piazza. I had heard—things about M. de Montville, and I didn't feel as if I could dance with him. And so when I found he was opposite me, my heart stood still. And when it came my time to dance I said: 'I don't care to dance, please.'"

"That was great!" broke in the boy exultantly. "There isn't another girl here that would have had pluck enough to do that!"

"It seems as if it ought to have been right," said Margaret seriously, "but it wasn't. The instant I had said it I knew it was a hateful thing to have done. The waltz came to an end at

last. Somehow, M. de Montville made everybody think I was too tired to dance. Will MacDonald asked me if I ~~feel~~ able to go on."

"Just like De Montville's confounded assurance," growled Benson.

"I don't think that is nice of you a bit." She turned on him with spirit. "He was quite right."

"But—" Benson's honest face was perplexed.

"Yes, I know. I don't understand it myself. I thought—that—of him—and it ought to be right to act the way you think. But somehow it isn't. I always get into trouble when I do. Mother was indignant with me."

"Of course," said Benson with a trace of contempt in his voice. Even he knew of De Montville's millions, and had observed the eagerness with which the Frenchman's feminine censors courted him.

"M. de Montville made me feel as if all the women who had been saying things about him were wrong, and I myself an ignorant, presuming school-girl. And yet when he looked at me it was as if I had trodden on some poor wounded little wood creature."

"That old man!" Imagination was not a dominant quality with George Benson. "Look here, Miss Dale, I won't have you thinking of that man."

Margaret rebelled at the masculine sternness in his tone.

"I am disappointed in you," she said, turning on him indignantly. "I thought you would be sympathetic and help me to see things right—and you just keep saying things like that. No one here thinks on a high plane like the girls at school. I thought there would be a straight road before me and I would know it was the right road. It always used to be so at school. But here there are all kinds of side paths, and they twist and turn. You start on one path, and the first thing you know you come out on another. And nobody seems to care. I had thought you were different from the others; I thought you would help me."

Benson straightened himself on his limb. And then it was revealed how

square were the shoulders, how challenging the poise of the head. The youth that had veiled his face fell away. It was as if the brow and mouth were being shaped with skillful strokes.

"It's—it's the biggest thing that ever happened to me, Margaret"—neither of them noticed the name—"to have you say you wanted me to help you. I don't like De Montville. And what I know about him isn't— But there must be something to pity in him, if you can find it, I fancy. And anyway, it's right for you to feel this way. I—" He stopped, for Margaret had started.

From her perch she could see the monotonous red brick stretch of the hotel. There were steps leading down from the broad piazza to the spring house with its pagoda roof. Still another flight of steps descended to the path which bordered the little river. Crossing the piazza were two figures, familiar even at that distance. They did not halt for a draught from Sainte Valerie's famous spring.

There was something ominous to Margaret in this slow descent. As the figures reached the path and turned toward them, she put out her hand toward Benson and touched his arm.

"There he is with mother now. I wonder—" The two in the tree held their breath unconsciously as Mrs. Dale and De Montville came down the path.

De Montville walked slowly, stiffly, with short steps. His light gray morning clothes were carefully built; the shoulders suggested bone and muscle. He had the height. His thick hair was very white, so white that, since the finely pointed mustache and brilliant eyes were densely black, it seemed a whim of nature destined to give distinction to the thin, dark face. Nothing, not even the eyes, spoke of age.

When they were almost under the tree Mrs. Dale stopped.

"I don't know where Margaret can be; surely she came this way," she said in a worried tone, looking up at De Montville. There was subservience in the glance; and yet the eyes were enough like Margaret's not to be able

to conceal a quiver of aversion. Mrs. Dale was holding her black gown carefully out of the dust. It had been remodeled to the point where a gown refuses to look new. M. de Montville had not overlooked this fact.

Margaret would have preferred to remain undiscovered. But it seemed, somehow, impossible to remain silent. George Benson, for all his blunt directness, had no such scruple. He was annoyed when Margaret's voice rang out: "Here, mother, up above you—look!"

Mrs. Dale saw and was not pleased. "M. de Montville has asked to see you, Margaret," she said. And there was a note of unwilling appeal in her voice.

M. de Montville was looking up into the girl's eyes. He thrilled again with the sense of something remembered.

"Is M. de Montville willing to climb?" asked Margaret mischievously. Mrs. Dale gave an apprehensive glance at the unchaperoned remoteness of the tree. But De Montville had begun intrepidly.

Mrs. Dale turned to George Benson. "Your mother has been looking for you."

Mrs. Benson was one of the leaders of the English set in Montreal, and Mrs. Dale knew she did not approve of Margaret. Mrs. Dale did not approve of George. He was young and had his way to make—the Bensons had no money. Moreover, Mrs. Dale had no desire to offend Mrs. Benson. There was in the little woman's consciousness a guilty knowledge of the origin of her scanty income which made a craven of her before ladies whose husbands were impeccably in the professions. While she herself was the daughter of an Anglican minister, the late Mr. Dale had been in trade—and in retail trade! Had it been wholesale, or had he made a fortune, she might have held her head a little higher. As it was, it be-hooed her to make no enemies.

In grumpy ill humor, George Benson walked away beside Mrs. Dale. De Montville watched him with a quiet smile of satisfaction. Then he turned to the girl. His eyes rested on the apple blossom tints of her skin with

gratitude. Her eyes, looking into the sunlight after the departing figures, seemed to him like golden brown pools of water in a shadowed wood. The light fell through the leaves on her cool hands. She was quiet; his thoughts drifted.

. . . He entered the castle. Everything was silent. Door after door swung noiselessly open and noiselessly shut behind him. Still he pressed breathlessly on. In the center, a lofty hall under the dome, was the princess. She was under a spell, and all around her lay her knights and ladies, mass upon mass of color. She herself slept in rose color, her brown hair all about her . . .

The brown hair of the girl before him caught the sun. De Montville started out of his dream to find her leaning forward, watching him with wonder in her eyes. He sat down beside her.

"How you are gay up here, mademoiselle, in the gold and the green with water that dances underneath!" He spoke with simplicity. "It makes me think of things I had forgotten."

"No, I think I am not gay," she said thoughtfully; "only quiet."

"But with you—oh, surely, yes—you may be quiet and yet be gay at the heart." He surprised her. She had observed him with ladies at the hotel. They seemed to her like people in the plays she had seen sometimes in vacation time. He had two manners, one gay, mocking, when those around him laughed at every phrase; the other slow, meaning, with unpleasant questioning glances. Now he seemed in another mood. His eyes were half closed; he watched her dreamily; there was a smile on his lips, young, poetic sweet. The apology which to her young conscientiousness was inevitable became an easy thing.

"But today," she said, "I am no happy at all; I am too much ashamed I was rude, so rude, to you. I—"

He raised his hand to stop her.

"Not that! You must not say it! I understand, and it is I that the understanding should make ashamed, not you. But that is to be past, is it not? We

shall think of it only as opening a door between us, that we may meet each other and that we may talk—not as I have talked with those others. Shall we?"

"Oh—if you wish it—"

He met the full gaze of her honest eyes—admirably.

Margaret had forgotten everything she had heard. She was his champion for all time.

"If you care—but I am so stupid before those ladies. I can never make you laugh as they can. You always seem to be at the center of all the pleasure. It is as if you were a magician and waved your wand."

"So that is what I seem!" He smiled, well pleased. Then an impulse seized him. Was it the human need of sympathy? Was it a subtle inspiration to bind to him this radiant girl in her Maytime? De Montville had never had a simple impulse in all his life. He bent forward; his eyes clung to hers. The phantasm of youth vanished—as the will to maintain it flagged. There were cruel lines in his face, hollows in the temples; his eyes were old, old.

"That is what I would seem to people, to the *canaille* of fashion. I hate them too much to have them know. For I suffer, mademoiselle; I suffer. I seem gay, you say. *C'est bon*—it is that I may not have to think. For of what lies behind me I have no wish to think. There are the ashes of my chateaux, the many castles that I have built with dreams of pleasure. And before me—mademoiselle, I have not long to live. I have an ill at the heart. If I dance, if I laugh—yes, if I drink enough wine, it will hasten the end. Then will there be fewer pangs—" In the midst of his real despair he saw with satisfaction that she was pale and that she wept.

De Montville had never had a vision of beauty that he had not pursued.

## V

"Is M. de Montville to take Miss Margaret on his drag?" It was Mrs. Jamison who asked the question.

"Yes, Mrs. Jamison," answered Mrs. Dale nervously. "She will drive with him—and Mr. and Mrs. Seabright."

"I see." Mrs. Jamison nodded significantly. Mr. and Mrs. Seabright were newly married, and, being notoriously absorbed in each other, were not fit chaperons.

The little group of three ladies and one elderly gentleman were waiting on the broad piazza of the hotel. It was two weeks since De Montville had climbed the tree to talk to Margaret. He had employed his time with precision. Whenever he approached the girl an audible flutter of excitement preceded him.

"There is M. de Montville's phaeton. Shall we start?" Mrs. Benson looked around her majestically. She carried her height with more than the dignity of a duchess.

"I think we'd better wait," said Mrs. Dale deprecatingly. "They will be here in a few minutes. They have only gone around the bend to try M. de Montville's new chestnut. He is not at all sure that his gait will match the other's."

Mrs. Benson inclined her head silently. She did not relish Mrs. Dale's new position of authority. Some consideration, of course, was due the mother of a girl who apparently had it in her power to make so brilliant a marriage. But for Mrs. Dale to be assuming airs of importance—it was really too absurd! Mrs. Benson looked at the carriage longingly. It was an English phaeton, low and deeply cushioned—and Mrs. Benson was at Sainte Valerie for her rheumatism. It was annoying to have to wait.

"It is curious that he should not be here, when his guests are waiting," she commented haughtily.

"Quite right to speed his horses. Got to know your horses on a long trip like this." Mr. Benson spoke as the man of the party.

"Is Mrs. Shearer going?" asked Mrs. Jamison innocently. The other ladies immediately assumed expressions of great unconsciousness. As the official

mouthpiece, Mrs. Dale replied to the question: "No, I believe not."

Around the long sweep of the carriage drive appeared an unusually high drag. Yes, Margaret was in the front seat with him! The Seabrights were behind! The silence in which two of the ladies watched the approach was fraught with different degrees of speculation, curiosity, excitement and criticism. While M. de Montville's impetuous pursuit of Margaret had been the topic of two weeks at Sainte Valérie, there was division of opinion as to his motives. Moreover, Margaret was baffling to inquiring ladies. Debate circled around two opposing positions—she was curiously stupid; she was incredibly secretive.

With dramatic suddenness De Montville brought the horses to a stand before the wooden carriage block and jumped gaily out. He assisted the ladies into the phaeton—Mrs. Jamison with gallantry, Mrs. Benson with deference, Mrs. Dale with a suggestion of filial affection; even to Mr. Benson he rendered assistance—resented by that gentleman.

"Damme!" thought George Benson's father. "Why does he help me? He is every day of my age!"

Suddenly Margaret exclaimed accusingly to Mrs. Benson: "Why, where is George—Mr. Benson?"

"He is playing tennis." Mrs. Benson added no comment to the information. It was not necessary that Margaret should know how George, in a rage because De Montville had arranged the party for Margaret, had refused to go. Mrs. Benson was supporting her son's ill humor with philosophy. It was satisfactory that M. de Montville's admiration should have developed at this harmless stage of the boy's fancy for Margaret.

The girl looked crestfallen at Mrs. Benson's information. De Montville saw her face. But he had no intention that she should remember her disappointment. He intended that she should forget it after the first mile. He knew that she had already forgotten that he had ever seemed old to her.

On that day there was something about M. de Montville that made any thought of age seem an absurdity. He carried himself jauntily. His eyes laughed and were soft. The details that wrought for the distinction of his appearance were a secret divided among his tailor, his valet and himself. The carnation in his buttonhole had come from Montreal that morning. They came for him every day—with Margaret's flowers. These were always roses, and pink roses, of course. She wore a great cluster that day. They quite glorified her schoolgirl serge into a costume of young ladyhood. They made Margaret feel that school was very far behind.

M. de Montville assured himself exhaustively of the comfort of his guests. He spread laprobes, raised sunshades, insisted on putting Mrs. Dale's wrap about her shoulders, gave minute directions to his man. At last he took the reins from the groom's hands; the chestnuts tossed their heads at his signal; they were off! The phaeton rolled discreetly behind.

Their way for a time lay by the side of the little river that flowed by the springs of Sainte Valérie. "*La p'tite rivière*," the *habitants* called it—it had no other name. They had left the hotel behind them but half a mile when the road forded the stream where it was shallow and climbed into a birch grove. There they loitered—De Montville had pulled the horses down to a walk—for their way was through a delicate land of white and green, where ranks on ranks of slender white birches stood knee deep in ferns. They descended a sunny slope. For a time they sped through the fertile valley that lay at the bottom of the hill. The farms stretched in long, narrow strips back from the road; they saw little save the fields already yellow with the harvest and the monotonous parallel lines of the fence rails. The *habitants* whom they met now and then plodding along the road—bowed, shaggy men or thick-waisted women—looked up and called out a cheerful, "*Bon jour, m'sieur.*" De Montville in-

## THE SMART SET

variably saluted. Margaret smiled at them sunnily; the Seabrights looked up hazily; and the group in the phaeton observed these greetings exchanged between French-Canadians and their own kind with self-respecting amazement.

"Isn't it good of them to speak to us?" said Margaret impulsively. "I like it. It makes everything we see look so much more interesting. It's as if they opened the doors of their *cabanes* and made us welcome."

"I like them," said De Montville. A black-eyed young woman toiling along the road with a heavy pail of blueberries in each hand showed all her white teeth in response to his lifted hat.

"They like you." Margaret glanced at him shyly. "I don't wonder. You look at them so kindly." And De Montville was well pleased.

"They are like the peasants at home," he said. "When I was a boy I used to go into the fields and pretend to help with the harvest, that I might be with them. I have never known any happy people since—until I met you, mademoiselle."

"Oh, M. de Montville"—Margaret was distressed—"surely you don't mean that. People are happy—unless they are ill," she added under her breath, for the memory of De Montville's confession had come back to her like a shadow. "Or unless they have some dreadful sorrow."

"You are right, mademoiselle. Everyone is happy who has what my peasants had—what you have—what I had—then. And"—he turned on her ardent eyes that seemed to have forgotten any other expression than the one that filled them—"I feel that I may have it again. For again I begin to believe—" Margaret was vaguely stirred and looked away.

Again the road drew near to the river and crossed it. Then for a space they rolled through a green lane with a cloistered roof of elms that shut out the sun, and with a deliciously moist, earthy smell. The horses clattered steadily on; fragrant boughs brushed their faces; Margaret drew in her breath sharply.

"Oh, was there ever such a day?" she cried.

"Never such a day since the world began—for me," said De Montville. "They say the day comes to all—but once. I wonder—" The question in his voice drew her uncomprehending eyes. He held them—released them—drew them again with resolve: "Many happy days to you until there shall come one—like mine."

They crept reluctantly out of the wood and down a sun-baked little hill. At the foot the river spread unexpectedly before them into a broad, tranquil sheet. The horses halted, trembling. From the phaeton, just appearing over the crest of the hill, came an inquiring shout. In answer, De Montville pointed to the ferry ropes which stretched across to the other shore. By the side dangled a rusty horn. De Montville blew—again and again. At last a barefooted woman came leisurely from a *cabane* opposite. She pulled deliberately on the rope while she surveyed the waiting party with calm eyes. The barge crept toward them silently. Silently holding the prow against the shore, she waited for them to embark. De Montville led his horses on to the barge. The off horse—the new one—danced restively when they left the shore. Mrs. Seabright, roused by terror, shrieked. Mr. Seabright reassured her nervously. Margaret watched the water slipping away. Had she been given to shrieking, she would still have felt no fear with De Montville. The phaeton was at the brink by this time, the ladies watching the ferry woman with complacent disapproval, directed chiefly at her bare feet.

When De Montville had his horses under control, he turned to the *Cadienne*:

"Good day, madame," he said gallantly, raising his hat. "Have you taken over many carriages today?" He used the native *patois* and inflection.

"Yes, m'sieur," she replied with a cordial smile. "One makes a pilgrimage today to the good saint, Jeanne de

Valois. There are many carriages ahead."

"We also are making the pilgrimage." De Montville smiled to himself as he thought what blessing it was that he desired the good Sainte Jeanne to grant.

"Mam'selle, your daughter, does she make the prayer?" De Montville's face clouded. He gave an apprehensive glance at Margaret. If she had understood! His daughter!

But Margaret's schoolgirl French had not included Canadian. The ferry woman observed his face. With quick tact she said:

"Hold! How I am stupid! I thought it was a pretty little girl—but it is a *demoiselle*!"

The landing made, De Montville helped to bring over the other carriage. This done, adieux were made—Mrs. Jamison and Mrs. Benson amazed at the *habitante's* assurance.

"*Bon voyage!*" the ferry woman called gaily after them. Then to M. de Montville, with a sly side glance at Margaret: "May the good saint give you your prayer!"

"What did she say?" asked Margaret.

"She thinks we have a prayer to make at the shrine of Sainte Jeanne," De Montville replied.

They left the river; their road lay through a level farming country. They passed *cabanes* swarming with black-eyed children. At intervals appeared the square, unadorned brick house of some substantial farmer. More rarely they saw a little village clustered around a gray stone church with glittering spire, the priest's house and a convent by its side.

"Oh, here is the little river again!" cried Margaret, as a turn in the road brought its green-bordered current into view. "Do we follow it, or does it follow us? Anyway, I am glad to see it."

"Always it follows—you." A sudden tension came into De Montville's voice as he turned to see her wind-flushed, sun-kissed face. You forget it—it creeps quietly under the shadows

of its trees. You remember it—it flows along beside you, singing. You weary of it—it hides itself in its shores. You are impatient with its never satisfied clamor—it thrusts its slopes between it and you and is gone. You recall it—and it flashes into view. I think it loves you, mademoiselle, the little river; does it not seem so? But it waits and contents itself, for it means that you shall feel friendliness for it—first. And then for a time it will dance along beside you in the sun—"

"And then?" laughed Margaret, pleased at the fancy.

"Perhaps it, too, prays to the saint," said De Montville lightly. "We shall see."

They found the village swarming with pilgrims from all the countryside. The inn, of course, was crowded. So they tethered their horses in a grassy spot under great elms. After some genius of his own, De Montville marshaled the landlord—gesticulating despair—and the stolid English groom into effectiveness. A luncheon was evoked that did not want some passable sauterne, cooling in a bucket of ice. No one understood better than De Montville the alchemy that transforms a mediocre repast into a festival. Mrs. Dale forgot to be apologetic; Mr. Benson told anecdotes that, since they dated from his college days, were not without a point; Mrs. Jamison was almost girlish, and Mrs. Benson was her most gracious self—which was charming enough to bring glances of open admiration from Margaret. The Seabrights talked to the others. And Margaret! She listened, rosy and bright-eyed, to it all. She was charmed to find that grown-up people really had a good time. She flashed approval of De Montville's wit. She nearly choked herself in the conflict between an honest appetite and a too keen appreciation of Mr. Benson's stories—that gentleman began to look upon her with eyes of approval. She was so appealing in her sparkling, unconscious enjoyment that De Montville, who saw her always, even when his eyes were turned away, felt his careful planning dissolve into

mere emotion. He could not wait until it was wise to speak.

## VI

THE visit to the church must be made. It had been built in the last century, and was larger than the parish churches they had passed on their way. It had some dignity, too, other than that bestowed by the passing years. When they entered a priest was pronouncing benediction. Everyone was kneeling, except those whose infirmities prevented, and these were reverent, with bowed heads and folded hands. The last word was intoned. A wave of hope and faith passed over the multitude. When they rose it was with the joy of unquestioning belief bright on their faces.

All the party from Sainte Valerie save Margaret and De Montville inspected calmly. They observed, with amused superiority, the crude holiday costumes of the pilgrims, the tinsel decorations of the church, the votive offerings, crutches and bandages—symbols of never-to-be-forgotten suffering—which rose in masses on either side of the chancel to the rose window in the chancel arch.

But Margaret and De Montville, meeting from opposite paths, were of the scene, not outside of it. Margaret looked on, wet-eyed, gripped by an emotion she did not comprehend. And De Montville felt the memory of past beliefs stealing over him like a healing lotion, until it seemed to him that he should attain his desire. Margaret, looking up, her brown eyes wistful, was amazed to see his lips moving. He met her eyes.

"Let us find the shrine by the falls," he said. "There it may be that we shall hear what the river has to say to the saint."

They left the rest of the party conscientiously studying—through lorgnette and eyeglass—the ecclesiastical pictures in the nave. De Montville led the way through a narrow, fern-bordered path. The shrine was in a

lovely spot, a green amphitheater cut out of the ancient forest. A worn, gilded image of the saint, the gilt worn off where pilgrims' lips had kissed to the wood underneath, stood under a narrow penthouse with steeply sloping sides. The clasped hands supported a sheaf of letters which spoke of answer to prayer; around the base a pyramid of crutches, sticks and bandages rested in grateful witness to the healing of Sainte Jeanne de Valois. A little river, sprung from a hidden source in the side of the bluff at her feet, took for its first step in the world a headlong fall, and dashed into foam at the bottom, rushed and gurgled in its quest of a channel to the plain below. Running frantically around bowlders, fretted into ineffective whirlpools, it, too, seemed to hold up white hands, imploring, before it turned away in its decorous appointed channel.

But with De Montville there was now no prayer to the saint. He did not take his eyes away from the girl beside him. Margaret, too, had lost interest in the childish saint who answers simple prayers. The complexity, the infinite change of water in its seeking fascinated her. So she did not wonder at De Montville's silence. When he spoke, it was because the silence was broken that she started—not at the tone. She had had nothing to teach her what that constrained husky voice meant.

"Do you not think now that the river prays to the saint?"

She turned her face to his with the delighted flash of comprehension that he loved.

"It is afraid to venture without a blessing, isn't it?"

"It is an imbecile to be afraid. Whether the saint blesses or not, there is joy in the leap—is it not so, ma-demoiselle? Do women not love better the man who demands what he must have?" Margaret looked at him wonderingly. He was abashed. A sudden tender remorse made his voice tremble.

"I am ashamed that I have forgotten that you are—young, and that you do

not understand unless a man speak to you with your own pure simpleness. But, mademoiselle, the faith of my youth came back to me in the church. It remained long enough to make me believe that—what I longed for—might be." He paused a moment to choose his words.

"I know that I cannot hope you even know what it is I feel. But it surely cannot be that, loving so, I may not cause in you a little—feeling?" Still there was no response in the girlish face. His voice fell into greater harmony. He took her hands gently in his.

"Above all things that I have ever yet desired, I long to make you love me, Marguerite."

Margaret stared at him stupidly. It seems incredible that this should have come to her as a revelation. But for the past two weeks, since by his confession she had felt anger at herself for having so hurt a doomed man, she had been happily convinced that she was "being good" to him, to atone. She had been dazzled by De Montville's resources in charming; she had been frankly delighted with the drives, the flowers, the atmosphere with which he had surrounded her. It was new in her experience, and it was very delightful that penance should be made so charming. But she was so absorbed in charitably making him forget his pain that she ignored what, otherwise, even her inexperience must have felt instinctively.

"Why, you know I—like you," she stammered at last, still unbelieving what his eyes made her feel.

"No, no; it is not that!" He waved her words away impatiently. "It is your love I mean—surely you know that—the love that would make you mine—to cherish—to love—" His voice shook.

Margaret turned faintly sick from his passionate eyes. She was afraid of him. Yet it seemed impossible that she could deny him—it was the first wooer. This was so monstrous an answer to her dreams of what love would be like. This old man—for so he

seemed to her youth—with his white hair, the hunger in his eyes, his drawn face! And the young lover, before whom her fancy had bowed itself, who would stoop and take her hand— Her mind had never gone beyond tenderness and tremulous expectancy. She looked at De Montville appealingly and began to cry.

"Oh—not you," she sobbed. "Please don't ask me to do that! I couldn't—I couldn't—"

The white marks came out on De Montville's face, as they had done the night she had refused to dance with him. And, as then, he understood. The horror in her voice stung him. He walked away from her to the edge of the bluff and stood for a moment looking at the restless turmoil of the water. He watched it—it was frantic with baffled appeal. His own thoughts dashed themselves to spray on the rocks. They went out on the current.

When De Montville came back to Margaret there was no emotion in his face.

"I do not want to distress you." He spoke gently, and yet there was something in his voice before which Margaret felt humble. "You must believe, mademoiselle, that my love is too great for that. I beg that you will allow me to remain of your friends; you need have no fear that I shall startle you again. We shall be friends, my little Marguerite. I may perhaps be able to discover for you an added flower for your garden of youth. And it may be that in the future you may feel—"

He did not finish his sentence, but he smiled at her so kindly that she forgot to be afraid.

## VII

It was De Montville who prevented the return drive from being hard for Margaret, De Montville whose mental suffering was fast becoming physical exhaustion. For, in spite of his jaunty courage, he had no illusions. He knew how much her recoil had meant. And the knowledge had not been easy to

bear. Not even the determined smile upon his lips could prevent the gray pallor, out of which his eyes glowed, from being evident. But the Frenchman's regard for *les convenances* did what philosophy or kindliness might not have accomplished in another nature. He bore the necessary burden of conversation. The burden was quite unshared. The Seabrights exhibited signs of a disagreement—one was dignified, the other ready to weep. Margaret, shocked into sudden maturity, was oppressed with remorse. An occasional backward glance at the phae-ton disclosed bored, elderly occupants.

M. de Montville began to realize, after the first mile or two, that he might have some difficulty with the horses. The new chestnut was nervous and bad-tempered, shied at every shadow, and bit viciously at the curb. Both pulled badly and his arms were tired. With the spirit of bravado which had helped him out of almost as many dilemmas as it had hurried him into, he became very gay. He paid court to Margaret the most brilliant and audacious. Margaret, called back from a mood of pensive sentiment, looked at him wonderingly and half reproachfully. It was not long, however, before she was laughing, charmed, rewarding him with glances of shy, dazzled admiration. De Montville saw, and his spirits rose higher and higher. He told himself that he had merely mistaken the method. It was not by the revelation of what he himself felt that he would win. He was an imbecile not to have known it. But her curiosity about the world that lay outside of her knowledge, her admiration for the resources of his mind, the fascination of his cleverness, these things he could use. Later, yes, a *nuance* of the tenderest sentiment—but guarded—oh, monastic.

"*Voilà pour le temple de Pallas Athène!*" he said gaily to himself.

He profited by his belief in himself and charmed. Even the Seabrights listened while he talked, with explosions of interest and wonder. He had known of the life of the world whatever was most full of color and event—Paris—

provincial France—Monte Carlo—Normandy—English country houses—Morocco—the Nile. And everywhere, while he was being frivolous and laughing with the other idlers, he had been a shrewd analyst of the conditions that lie hidden. With his other brilliancies; he was dramatic; events acted themselves as he talked. And—oh, shrewd De Montville—whenever he had been most cynical—a revelation of feeling—sometimes a comment, sometimes a bit of narrative, sweet, poignant—the quick tears flashed to Margaret's eyes. Then he looked wistfully at her. It was difficult to keep up the role. He was wondering.

The horses bolted. De Montville sat up, instantly alert. They had known that his grip had relaxed. A moment's struggle—he himself knew how fierce—the pace slackened. He sat back, his breath coming too quickly.

"What was it?" asked Margaret.

"I let them exercise themselves a trifle," he answered with a difficult smile.

The miles dropped behind them. They were beyond the ferry and were driving through the birch grove, more a fairyland than ever in the afternoon shadows. Through the trees Margaret caught sight of the river, plodding quietly now, leaden under heavier skies. She started.

"There it is again," she said. "I had almost forgotten it was there."

De Montville looked significantly into her eyes.

"It will be there always. And you shall never forget it. Its music will be with you as long as you live—and as the murmur"—De Montville forgot his promise; with his nature the promise was destined to be broken—"so it will be with my love. However much you struggle, it will be as though you had not stirred. In the end I shall win. And then, Marguerite"—his face became for a breath beautiful with the softly shining eyes—"it may be that you will let me teach you how good it is to love."

Margaret made a blind gesture. She felt as if she were being smothered, and

it made her resentful. She must struggle. She spoke—although she could not meet his eyes.

"I feel as if you were being unfair to me. You are trying to make me feel something that I don't want to feel, and it is wrong—I know it is. And sometimes you are stronger than I am. Please don't. Oh, M. de Montville, I like you so much—but it wouldn't be right; love ought to be—different." Courage came to her, and she was able to look him in the eyes without wavering. "I know you can never make me."

Something in De Montville pleaded for the girl. He knew that he had never been so ungenerous. But he wouldn't yield, and he felt wretchedly ill.

The news of his failing force traveled along the reins to the chestnuts. The off horse shook his head, thrust out his jaw with defiance. He got the bit in his teeth. And then—a glorious rush to liberty! De Montville turned vaguely to combat this outside enemy. He forced himself to be strong. He sent his will along the lines. A desperate moment—he had control! But in that instant the strain of the day reached his heart and he fell back fainting.

Margaret, wrenched out of her own emotion, saw and understood. She got the reins in her hands and pulled bravely at them. But the horses knew the difference. The drag lurched dizzily from side to side. Mrs. Seabright screamed and tried to jump. Her husband had just force enough to pull her down.

George Benson was drifting moodily along the road just beyond the bend. His mind all day had been full of Margaret. Something kept him from blaming her—but he couldn't understand why she should be tolerant of De Montville. Since it was not to be thought that she could be wrong, he vented his anger on her mother, on his mother, on all the women—but most of all on De Montville. For De Montville he had a feeling that every minute was growing away from a boy's instinctive

distrust into something more personal. Margaret was beyond all question something more precious than the rest of the world—and Margaret was plainly the object of De Montville's pursuit. And—Benson knew something of the Frenchman's career. Benson had an honest loathing for things which he had no hesitancy in pronouncing unclean.

He was very unhappy. So many things were stirring in him which had never before arisen in the boy's wholesome, sunny life. He felt beaten, put aside. But more than that, an obscure trouble made him turn even from tennis with an impatient throb in his throat. He had shunned the river and kicked his golf clubs into the corner. And now for an hour he had been haunting the road down which Margaret would come—back to him. He hardly knew of what he was fearful, but—she had been the whole day with De Montville. Would the look in her eyes be the same?

Down the road came the headlong hoofbeats of runaway horses. He knew whose they were. Without emotion, with scarcely any paling of his ruddy face, he braced himself in the road and waited. It was a wearisome time before they were on him. He felt a moment's wonder that it was Margaret who sat so steadily, hands on reins; there was time for a throb of pride in her. In the next instant he was being dragged off his feet, wrenched, pounded with fierce breathing. His hands did not swerve from the bits; he had stopped them.

There was a time of stupid calm. Nobody moved. Benson had time to see that De Montville was huddled lifelessly along the seat—that Seabright had been frightened.

"Come here, Seabright; stand at the head," he commanded. Then, when there was no response, he said, with a careful absence of expression: "There's no danger." He reached for Margaret's hands. His face was white at last and his lips quivered.

"Are you sure you're not hurt?" he demanded sternly. When he found

that she was limp from the reaction, he lifted her without a word. He carried her—he had no time to know how his heart pounded as her head fell on his breast—to the wayside. He brought water from one of Sainte Valerie's springs near by. He bathed her face in silence, his eyes on hers. In a few minutes the color began to come back to her face. She began to cry hysterically, but checked herself when she saw his alarm. She sat up.

"Where is M. de Montville? Please go to him; he is ill." Benson ground his teeth and strode away.

He found that Mrs. Seabright and the ladies from the phaeton—which had driven up at full speed—had surrounded M. de Montville. The Senior Benson was hovering fussily around. De Montville was still unconscious; his lips were blue. Benson carried him to the grass by the side of the road—on the side opposite to Margaret. It was astonishing how light the Frenchman was. Then George sent his father to the hotel for brandy and the doctor.

Before help arrived De Montville opened his eyes. He saw George Benson bending over him, the alarmed group, the trembling horses with Seabright at their head. Remembrance came to him.

"Mademoiselle—" he asked faintly.

Benson's tone was gentle. His dislike for the man had been forgotten in his concern. "She is safe," he said.

"Who stopped the horses?"

"There wasn't anyone else around."

"I see," said De Montville. "Then you have saved her life—and mine. I"—he made a struggle after his courtesy—"I thank you, M. George Benson."

De Montville lay back weakly. He turned his eyes with difficulty to where Margaret sat, pale still and looking at Benson with awe. Unerringly he saw himself—limp, ghastly, and the beautiful, strong, young creature who was now bending anxiously over Margaret. He repeated to his unwilling consciousness that this youth had held the lives of all in his hands and that he had proved himself heroic; that he was en-

during their gratitude almost shame-facedly. And Margaret's warm, young enthusiasm! He raised his hand with difficulty and bit it! Benson just then came back with the brandy—the doctor could not get there immediately. George raised the sick man up, holding a glass to his lips. De Montville bent back his head to get a good look into the young man's eyes.

"I thank you, M. George Benson. You have saved—for me—the life of Mademoiselle Marguerite. You are courageous. I salute you." And then, his duty discharged, he indulged himself. He had always felt an antagonism for Benson. Now he knew why. Thus he felt almost recompensed for the events of the day when he had sent a long, satisfactory declaration of hatred straight into the young man's eyes.

## VIII

FROM the first day of his illness M. de Montville prepared himself for another attempt to win Margaret. His purpose was none the less completely selfish that suffering had resolved it into something more immaterial.

In spite of kindly commonplaces of encouragement, he knew that he was slowly to die. Then she should help him to die. With her vigorous hand in his, her soft lips on his, the tender warmth of her youth beside him, it would not be so ugly to die.

Therefore, day after day, he lay quiescent. He obeyed the commands of his doctors and nurses with docility. He kept his mind blank that its strength might more quickly return. For his mind was the thing that should procure for him his desire. He was patient, and before many days his mind was again keen. He had no self-illusions. Vanity with him was momentary and superficial. In essentials he saw himself clearly. He knew just what things he had in his favor—the position of the mother, Margaret's tenderness for hurt things, the youthful craving for self-sacrifice, his own knowledge of how to use these advan-

tages. The first he considered—and dismissed contemptuously; Mrs. Dale could have at most only an indirect influence. In the other forces he put his trust. Against him— But De Montville knew he could not afford to think of anything discouraging. If he had been well—yes, it would have made him prudent. But he needed all his optimism to give him strength.

Still, back of his consciousness, even when he was most resolutely not thinking of him, loomed George Benson. To be sure, Benson was a boy; he did not know his own power; and Margaret was unawakened. He was slow thinking where De Montville's thoughts flashed incisive yet ordered. But Benson had youth—there was the sting—magnificent, unsullied young manhood. He wielded the ineffable glamour of the future. No, it was not wise for a stricken man to think of him. But he could hate him. And that, on the whole, helped De Montville in his purpose.

Barely alive to the onlookers, day by day he pulled himself further away from death. And when he was as far away as he could ever hope to be, he had evolved his plan. He knew just how far he could appeal to pity. He must avoid making himself pitiable—there must be something poetic in his sufferings. He could have checked off on his fingers the skillful touches that were to make the girl long to immolate herself that the last days of a dying—but fascinating—man might be full of peace. Above all, no painful details of physical disease. Instead, a pensive sentiment that should be almost beautiful. All this he could think out calmly while he could have wept like a lonesome child for his mother.

Margaret had come into his life, and she had aroused in him a passion so strong that it had created for him a mirage of happiness. It was not that he defied the sentence that overhung him—he forgot it. It was a vapor dissipated by her young eyes. He had bent himself to win. He was confident, being himself, that he should win. For he could still see visions.

. . . . He saw again the castle of his dreams and the princess—still asleep. He bent to awaken her, with his love upon his lips. He waited, for he thought that she, too, would hold out her arms to him. . . . But something was happening. The doors which had closed so silently upon him now clanged, one after the other. At the ever increasing noise the knights and ladies stirred, and the princess rubbed her eyes childishly. . . .

## IX

MARGARET distinguished the uniform of one of M. de Montville's nurses at the further end of the tunnellike hall. She went eagerly toward the young woman.

"How is he this morning?"

Miss Milner's professional imperturbability softened as she recognized the girl.

"He is better than he has been since the accident, Miss Dale. The doctor thinks that in another week he may be moved back to Montreal—if there is no recurrence."

"I am so glad," said Margaret impulsively. "It would be so forlorn for him. Everybody is leaving. We are going tomorrow."

"Yes, I think M. de Montville knows that." The nurse smiled to herself as she moved off.

Margaret wandered down to the piazza and hung over the railing. In the three weeks of De Montville's illness the early fall had come upon them. Even the goldenrod and asters were beginning to look brown. There was a bleak chill in the morning air; the last guests shivered in the draughts of the hastily built summer hotel.

Beside M. de Montville and his two nurses, Mr. and Mrs. Benson, Margaret and her mother, only three families remained. George Benson had gone back to Montreal the week before to begin his law studies. He was preparing to enter into partnership with his father, who was counsel for the Grand Trunk Railroad. Margaret felt forlorn and deserted. She eyed the

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empty tennis court disconsolately. There was no one in sight—and then it was tame playing with anyone but George. By closing her eyes she could see him in his white flannels, see the poise of his figure as he stood waiting for her service; the sun was in his eyes, so he was frowning a little and yet smiling at her in a way he had.

When Mrs. Benson appeared around the corner of the hotel, marching sedately on her morning constitutional, Margaret smiled shyly at her. The smile was an invitation. Mrs. Benson stopped beside her. Now that George was safely back in Montreal, she felt pleasantly inclined toward this brown-eyed, rosy girl. And then the future mistress of De Montville's estate demanded recognition. Still, she felt a certain wonder that a girl could do as the hotel had quite decided Margaret meant to do—Mrs. Benson had married her own husband for love. And although that rather imprudent marriage was the reason that the Bensons were still annoyed with money difficulties, she never could get rid of a certain prejudice in favor of such divine rashness. However, this did not prevent her from being delighted that temptation was to be removed from George.

All things considered, she smiled at Margaret kindly, and they talked, mainly of M. de Montville's illness. Then Mrs. Benson started to go—and lingered.

"I really ought to be writing to my son," she said. "But one grows indolent here."

Margaret was silent. She had no letter to write. He had written none to her. Of course, there was no reason to expect one—he had seemed constrained the last few days before he went—and yet—they had been such good friends.

"I had a letter from him in the afternoon mail yesterday." Mrs. Benson was not above feeling a little curiosity as to whether the girl was really interested in her son. When she had spoken she wondered at the loveliness of the eager face turned to her, wondered—and was dubious.

"Does he like his lectures?" Margaret asked quickly with respect for the law in her tone.

"He has heard only one." Mrs. Benson smiled in amusement. "But he is very much absorbed. He always throws himself in to the thing he is doing and forgets everything else. He would forget to write if I hadn't made his brother promise to remind him." She moved slowly away, leaning on her cane.

Margaret moved restlessly. It was all very well for people to be absorbed, but it wasn't pleasant to be forgotten. And it was dreary here after everyone had gone. She would be glad to get back to Montreal. But probably he would be too busy to come to see her even if he had asked to call. She started up impatiently with a half-formed intention of finding her tree—or of rowing. Then her mother came.

Mrs. Dale was thinking. It was time to go back to town. In the summer, when she was away from the city, things had a way of seeming easier. After she had planned at the beginning of the season for their expenses, that was the end of it for two months or more; she had some rest. But they were going back tomorrow, and then would begin the dreary struggle of trying to live like gentlefolk should—on so pitifully little. In the summer it was so much easier to manage about clothes—Margaret always looked so sweet in her print frocks. But this year they would both need new cloaks. She sighed. Then she saw Margaret.

"Have you inquired about M. de Montville this morning?" she asked.

"Yes; he is better," said Margaret absently.

Mrs. Dale glanced at her daughter uneasily. She was silent, trying to get up courage to speak.

"My dear"—she spoke timidly—"before he was taken ill, M. de Montville told me—of his hopes of you. Did he say anything to you?"

"Yes, mother."

Mrs. Dale waited for Margaret to go on. But Margaret was looking away—

over the tennis court to the trees beyond.

"Well?"

Margaret turned toward her. The girl was blushing painfully, and there were tears in her eyes.

"I think it is dreadful to have to talk of such things," she said. "But he did—the day of the accident—before we left Sainte Jeanne."

"And what did you say?" Mrs. Dale tried to keep the eagerness out of her voice.

"Why, mother, what could I say? People have to—love—other people—to marry them. And how could I love him—that way?"

Mrs. Dale's eyes filled with tears. She remembered her own youthful ideals. She looked at Margaret—started to speak—and checked herself. When she did speak she had chosen her words carefully.

"It is pitiful to think of him—so ill and so alone. If there were only someone with him for whom he cared."

Margaret looked miserable. "He is very fond of old Pierre," she said.

"A servant! They never have any feeling. He ought to have someone who would care for him, have some tenderness. Sick people feel those things so keenly."

"Oh, please don't talk to me like that, mother!" Margaret burst out. "You make me feel that I ought to do it. And I know that it wouldn't be right. I feel that it wouldn't."

"I wouldn't influence you, dear," said the mother. Then she sighed again.

Margaret winced at the sound. Her eyes strayed over to the tennis ground and rested there.

"I—I think I will get my racquet and practice my service—or—row up the river a little way," she said, and turned to enter the hotel.

Mrs. Dale watched her as she was hurrying away. The mother did not like the part she was playing. But years of martyrdom to sordid difficulties had had their effect. It could not be for long, she thought.

At the foot of the main staircase

Margaret paused. Somebody was coming down the stairs, somebody walking feebly and uncertainly. Margaret needed a second glance to assure herself that it was De Montville. Even with the recollection of him as she had last seen him on the day of the accident fresh in her mind, she was shocked at his appearance.

De Montville saw her. In the same moment a change came over him. He straightened himself jauntily. He walked down the few remaining steps with some lightness. And when, at the foot of the stairs, he took Margaret's hand in his, there was a wonderful smile on her lips.

"But—but you ought not to be up," she gasped. "I am afraid it will make you worse. Let me call Miss Milner."

"No—I was looking for a more skillful nurse. That is why I am here." He smiled at her tenderly. "Oh," shaking his head gaily, "it does no good to talk. You will come in here?" He motioned toward the deserted reception room on the right. "Here we can be alone."

Margaret followed, dazed. He pulled a chair into position for her—he gallantly kissed the hand she put out to stop him. As she dropped into the chair she was blushing deeply, for he had made her forget his condition—until it was expedient to recall it. De Montville seated himself—so strong was his purpose that he was able to do it without signs of weakness. He proposed that there should be no unpleasant reminder of illness. He chose still to be a man.

## X

As De Montville sat opposite Margaret in the bare little reception room, it was as he had intended it should be. Margaret saw before her a man, emaciated, pale, but with a smile that was full of charm and eyes that had translated pain into appeal. Unconsciously she sank back into her chair.

De Montville began to speak.

"May I tell you a little of my life, mademoiselle? It may be that you

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will better understand what it has been to me to know you. We come, we of De Montville, from the south bank of the Loire. It was there, on my father's lands, that I lived my childhood. It seems to me now that I must have lived it in a dream. The fancies are as real as the facts of my existence. You see, I was very much alone. My mother was occupied with the affairs of her menage, with her visits; my father was busy with his factors. There were no other children.

"It was very beautiful—the old rooms, the faded tapestries, the delicate curved legs of the chairs reflected in the polished floors, the fifteenth century glass in the chapel, the green reaches outside, the magical pink of the orchards, the quietly flowing river. But it was not beautiful enough to satisfy me. There were always greener reaches, more mysterious groves, a statelier chateau—off somewhere—just beyond the horizon. I was always hoping to find the hidden soul of beauty. In some river grotto, just beyond the pool into which I was peering, I knew there must be rarer colors, and among them sleek, shadowy-haired creatures sporting—later on, when the good Abbé Girard had opened for me the Latin poets, I knew that I should have called them nymphs. When the apple trees were in flower I could not fully enjoy the springtime glamour of the world. For I was always expecting to discover, hidden in the blossoming branches, a little pink and white brown-eyed creature who would play with me—you see, I had no playmate. That is why, when I saw you first, all brown and pink, in your white robe, with pink and white and glossy green around you, it seemed to me that you were a memory out of my childish dreams. It was never of a boy playmate of whom I thought—they had always bored me as strange, wild creatures with coarse, incomprehensible ways.

"The stories my *bonne* told me—of gold at the end of the rainbow, of Aladdin, of enchanted palaces and beautiful princesses, old romances, too, dimly guessed at from the library books—all

these fostered my dreaming. I could not distinguish the real world from that which lay only in my own mind. I lived in a fairy world, building my chateaux in which I was to find new pleasures with the creatures of my restless dreaming." He paused a moment. Margaret watched him with wide eyes on which lay the glamour of De Montville's touch. De Montville nodded imperceptibly and went on:

"When I grew to be a man it was still the same. I sought always more poetic lands, fairer beings to people them. In the midst of my young joyfulness I toiled at my chateaux. At that time I could go wherever my desires directed me, my father and mother both being gone. It would have been better had it not been so. At last it came to be one image, instead of many, that haunted me—the little child companion of my boyish dreams—a woman—a woman with the rose flush of youth and clear eyes, which yet should hide within their brown depths the mystery of simple things, and a mouth which the kiss of the seeking prince must waken into loving." He paused again, but this time he did not meet her eyes. He looked away for a moment uneasily. It was not until he heard a soft sigh that he took up his story.

"I sought her everywhere, this princess to dwell in my chateau. There is that in the life of a man which you cannot understand, mademoiselle, any more than the princess of the story who was awakened out of her dreams of childhood into loving. It had not been her part to wander—as had the prince, to seek often the princess in chateaux of false dreams—to wake the princess—and with a kiss—and find the woman not a princess at all, and not dreaming.

"And in my seeking the years vanished like a dream. One after one of my castles had burned into ashes. And I was worn and unbelieving, and my heart was gray with disappointment and weariness of it all. And then in the evening—oh, not in the morning as it should have been, the morning when I set out with my boy's dream of

beauty still pure in my heart—I saw you. And you wore the rose flush of youth and clear eyes which yet had within their brown depths, like a quiet forest pool, the mystery of simple things. And though it was so late, Marguerite, as soon as I found you I loved you."

Youth had come again into the face of the sick man. There was a flush on his countenance; his eyes glowed; his voice trembled—with ardor, not with weakness. Margaret was breathing quickly. De Montville saw it.

"And that is why I could not go without seeing you. I made Miss Milner tell me that you were to go to-morrow. In Montreal it might need more to see you than the will to descend the stairs. So I came. You must know that I cannot live if I am denied the right to see you. You know it, Marguerite?" She raised her eyes helplessly, and he was answered.

"Can you picture to yourself what my life will be henceforth in the grim house that is now home to me? I go to it but to die. The doctors have told me that it will not be long—and if I leave my bed that will shorten the time still more."

"Oh, M. de Montville," said Margaret, choked with feeling, "I am afraid it has hurt you to come downstairs. Indeed, you should not have come."

"I am more wise than the doctors," he smiled. "I am risking a few days to gain a lifetime of joy. For you cannot—so tender you are—deny to me these few weeks of your springtime. If you knew—but you cannot know—what friendlessness and regret for what is past and what longing can work in a life that each day marches further out into the night! I rejoice that you cannot know it. But that hunger at the heart—that is my love for you—must that go unsatisfied—until the end?"

Margaret looked at him but could not speak. Her throat ached.

"It will be only for a little—but that little is my life. If you were there, Marguerite, in the days that must come—if I could look at you moving about—if your brown eyes could smile at me

with a little tenderness, I could be happy—and you would be creating it, that happiness. Would that not be something, dear little tender heart?"

De Montville had finished. He fell back against the back of his chair. Even in his weakness he watched Margaret keenly. He had done well. He knew he could not have made a better plea. He judged it, weighed its effect on her—and while he was doing it his eyes were filled with pity for himself, with a craving for sympathy.

Margaret was moved out of herself into a passion for giving. It seemed a beautiful thing to minister to him, to lavish upon him every device of cherishing that the woman in her could compass. She put out her hands impulsively.

There was a noise from outside. Her eyes strayed involuntarily through the window into the free, young out-of-doors. The carriage which met the morning train from Montreal was driving up. It always brought the mail from town—from town, where George Benson was! Would there be a letter? What right had she to expect a letter? Never, if—

When she looked at De Montville—De Montville, who was almost confident, afraid to be triumphant, sick with suspense—there was knowledge in her honest eyes. There was tenderness; there was pity—but there was no yielding.

"I wish I could do what you ask me. A minute ago it seemed right—but it isn't. Oh, M. de Montville, please forgive me, but it isn't. I am sure that I ought not to marry you unless I love you, and—I am sure—I don't feel—that way. It would be a sort of lie, don't you see, for both of us. And I don't believe anything could make a lie right—not even, dear M. de Montville, if I could make you happy. Oh, I do so want to do that! Let me come to see you—take care of you—anything but—that!"

She was sobbing, but De Montville hardly noticed it. He sat still, drawing difficult breaths. At last, with an effort at recollection, he raised himself.

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He wavered. Margaret sprang to help him. Fiercely he motioned her away, and with endurance climbed the stair alone.

Margaret watched him fearfully. Once she tried to recall him—it seemed too cruel. But he didn't hear. At the head of the stairs the alarmed nurse found him.

In the mail was a letter to Margaret from Benson. It was stiff and embarrassed, but she understood.

"He does mean it; he does want to see me!" Margaret had fled to her own room. She had to be alone to read it. "He is so queer. He writes as if it were agonizing for him to say it, but he does want to see me! Oh, the dear letter!" And furtively, shyly, she kissed it.

## XI

MARGARET was taking off her hat and jacket in her room in the house on Magill College Avenue. Without the trifles that belong to every girl's room the little place would have been bare enough. As Margaret had arranged it, the austere airiness and military exactness had an air of distinction.

Mrs. Dale appeared at the door.

"Margaret, George Benson is downstairs," she said with manifest reluctance. Margaret passed her on her way to the wardrobe. Mrs. Dale lingered, watching her uncertainly. "How is poor M. de Montville today?" the mother asked finally. "It troubles me to think of him there all alone."

Margaret compressed her lips—the remark was one that recurred. When she answered her tone was a little distant.

"He was very ill today while I was there. But—he is very well taken care of, mother." The girl gave a furtive glance in the looking glass. She would have liked to smooth her hair and put on another collar. But she didn't want to do it before her mother. It would have seemed an admission that she cared to please the young man who was waiting for her in the drawing-room. As she passed her mother in the hall, Margaret stopped and kissed

her. Mrs. Dale saw then that the girl was pale. From the door Margaret looked back.

"M. de Montville was dreadfully ill," she said, and her lips quivered.

In the stiff little drawing-room with its carefully preserved portraits of Mrs. Dale's family, George Benson stood at attention, his eyes on the door. The room was chilly. The furnace had not been lighted, although the November was unusually cold.

Benson flushed as Margaret came into the room. Margaret colored, too, and they greeted each other with some constraint. The young man was ruddy with his rapid walk. His blond hair was darkened where it was pressed into damp rings by his hat brim. Margaret thrilled as she looked at him. She felt restless with happiness. She had not expected him that afternoon.

"Sit down, while I light the fire in the grate. It's chilly in here, and you might catch cold."

Benson was enchanted. To think of her caring whether he caught cold or not!

"Let me light it for you," he said eagerly. "I don't like to have you—"

"No, indeed; it's all ready. We don't like to waste the coal when we are not using the room. Give me your hat and coat; this sort of thing is my work, you know. You have enough to do."

"What have I to do?" he challenged.

"Oh, learning how to make money—and everything." She nodded to him over her shoulder on her way out of the room with his hat and greatcoat. Back again, she knelt on the hearth rug to light the fire. He leaned forward, watching her. There was a smile on his lips when the flames began to creep around the sticks of kindling. The coziness made him think of things.

"That will burn now; let me make you some tea."

"I haven't time, really."

"It will only take a minute. Everything is here."

"No, please don't. It will take you away—and I can't stay."

Margaret's face fell. She sat in the light of the fire she had kindled, her eyes downcast. Benson watched her wistfully.

"I was on my way to the four-fifteen lecture, and, do you know, Margaret, I couldn't walk past the house. I tried to, honestly I did."

They looked at each other and then he laughed—shamelessly. The girl watched the joyous curves of his lips with delight. Her eyes began to sparkle. But she made an effort to be merely sympathetic.

"Are the lectures fearfully heavy?"

"Oh, no; they're great. The law is made for me. The only fault I have to find with it is—" He paused and looked at her.

"Is what?"

"It's so long before a fellow can make his way. It will be two years before I am ready to begin. And then the deuce knows how long before I make enough for—well—enough—" he concluded lamely.

He put his hands in his pockets and stared straight ahead of him with stolidity. She tried to look unconscious and disinterested. And the word "enough" seemed to vibrate, independent of them, in the air about.

"A fellow that is a man has no right—" he began, and then discovered that this was not going to help matters.

"I have just come from M. de Montville," Margaret said at a venture, to fill in the pause. "He has been very ill today."

Instantly Benson's face clouded.

"It seems to me that you go there very often."

"I go almost every day," Margaret answered simply. For a moment Benson was studiously silent.

"I should think it would bore your mother to go with you," he commented at length dryly.

"Mother? Oh, she doesn't go with me. She did at first, but—I think she—worried M. de Montville. Sick people are so whimsical, you know." Margaret spoke indulgently.

"You — don't — go — there —

alone!" The sheer amazement of his tone startled her.

"Why—yes. He wants me to come."

Benson sat frowning at the floor. He found it hard to speak.

"I wish you wouldn't go there," he said heavily. "And if you must go, I wish you wouldn't go there alone."

"But why?" Margaret was hurt.

Benson lifted his eyes. When he met the wonder in Margaret's face, his own cleared. For the first time in their acquaintance he felt very much older than she, and the sensation was gratifying.

"Dear little girl," he said wisely, "it isn't usual. Your mother ought to go with you—I don't know what she can be thinking of!" he flamed out savagely, glad to think of someone on whom to vent his irritation—someone who wasn't Margaret.

"But mother worries him," Margaret repeated patiently. "He fidgets when he knows she is waiting for me, even. And it is hard on her to have to wait so long. And Mrs. Marvin—that's his housekeeper—is there, and she's a dear; she's lovely to me. And—when people are dying and want you—I think it is cruel to think whether it is—usual or not."

"De Montville ought to know better. You don't understand how people look at these things."

"Oh, yes, I do," said Margaret candidly. "I had a time with mother about it. She was terribly afraid of what people would say. But I didn't think it counted. I thought my friends, those I cared for, would understand." Her intent to reproach him was patent. But Benson disregarded it.

"Margaret, I beg that you will not go there."

"But he is so ill." Her voice trembled. "If you had seen him today—"

"For me?" he said softly.

Her eyes met his. Hers were full of trouble, but they did not waver.

"I am sorry—but I shall—have to."

Benson rose. He was angry; Margaret saw him so for the first time. He looked pale.

"I am going now," he said somberly.

"George!" she appealed to him. He met her eyes antagonistically. Then her color rose.

"You have no right to act like this," she said hotly. "If you are my friend you have got to believe that I think I'm right. I really don't think that anything more is necessary. You are arrogant to treat me like this just because I can't hurt him—even for you. Why, he is sick and lonely and despairing. I'm the only one—except old Pierre—who cares for him at all. And he is dying. I wouldn't ask you to be so cruel, no matter how much I hated her." At the last word an irrepressible look of gratification passed over the young man's face. He began to waver.

"But, Margaret—other people won't understand."

"I don't care whether they do or not." She turned on him indignantly. "The important thing is that he depends on me for happiness, and that he is dying. I am going to do just what he wants me to do." She looked at him defiantly. "And if I can't do it without losing my best friend—I will have to lose him." The tears that had been proudly held back overflowed. She put her hands before her eyes to hide them, and turned blindly away.

Benson shifted his position uneasily. He knew that he was going to yield; it was just a question of preserving his dignity as long as he could. He heard a despairing sob. His face softened tenderly.

"I—think I ought to be ashamed of myself, Margaret," he said with boyish generosity. "I think I am not capable of being fair where De Montville is concerned. You see, I dislike him, and he's taken no pains to hide that he hates me. But you couldn't do anything else—I see that. I suppose other people ought not to count if you are right; it was not really that which troubled me. It was—Do you think you can ever forget that I made such an ass of myself?" He was looking at her beseechingly.

Margaret inspected him gravely, dry-

ing her eyes with thoroughness and deliberation.

"I think—" she began with dignity. She moved unconsciously toward him. Suddenly she held out her hand to him recklessly.

"You are so dear," she said.

Benson did not move. He clenched his hands to keep them safely at his sides. They were somehow strangely rebellious. He caught desperately at his defenses. He had no right—Then the barriers went down before the rush of youth and love in him. She was in his arms, more close than he had ever known anything could be. He saw nothing but her eyes. And of those eyes he was asking a question that his lips had been keeping back for weeks. They were lowered before his. And then—oh, sweet eyes—they were raised bravely, swimming in tears. And they told him that he had won this tender, wonderful thing. And the boy's heart stopped beating for awe. He held her off, looking at her.

"I have no right to do it," he muttered remorsefully. "You see, it may be years, darling. But I'd like to know who could have helped it!" he demanded defiantly.

But then their lips met.

## XII

"MARGARET! Surely you are not going to accept those furs!" Generations of carefully trained matrons spoke in the horror of Mrs. Dale's tone. Margaret smiled an enthusiastic affirmative. Margaret was—older, somehow. As she stood before her mother, tall, poised, Mrs. Dale began to question the disapprobation she felt. The girl had a way of making her forget her own standards.

Margaret's gown and hat were of the rusty brown shades she loved. Over the gown was a long cloak of mink just taken from the furrier's box; her hands were thrust into an enormous muff. From this frame of burnt sienna and tawny softness her lovely face glowed, flushed with excitement. Her eyes

seemed to gather into their soft depths all the tones of the furs, and flash them out again, irradiated with the joy she felt.

"But what will people think? Mrs. Jamison will know that we could never have afforded anything like that—" Mrs. Dale knew, as soon as she had spoken, that this was not the proper line of attack. "Really, dear, I wish you would not."

"But why?" In the light of the questioning of Margaret's eyes Mrs. Dale found it difficult to answer.

"People will think—"

"Yes, mother, I know there is always that. But you must have some reason."

"I am not willing to have you accept them."

There was a pause. Margaret turned gravely to her mother.

"You were willing to have me marry him."

Mrs. Dale flinched. "That was different."

"Yes, it was different," Margaret repeated grimly.

"He wanted someone—not a servant—to care for him."

"Yes, after he became so ill." Margaret stood with averted face. The memory of painful scenes had come into her mind. She put them away. It had been a long time since De Montville had made her feel anything for him but pity and the tenderest affection.

"It would have been a beautiful charity, Margaret."

"It might have been—it was his illness that almost made me do it. But that was not the reason you urged me to marry him." There was no reply. The tears came to Margaret's eyes. "The dreadful money," she said.

Mrs. Dale's anxious face fell into lines of trouble that were not all ignoble.

"Can you wonder, dear, that I wanted to save you what I have had to go through? And it would have been such a mere form, a little time of care for him, and then—"

"His money, yes, I know." The

girl spoke with passionate directness. "And for the money I should have had to lie. And if it should have been a lie that deceived nobody, the more shameful. And George and I might have been married after M. de Montville's death—if George would have me. What a beginning of our life! Why, even M. de Montville wouldn't have it so now. I know he thinks so."

"But about the furs, Margaret—what will Mr. Benson think? You ought, at least, to consider him—that is, if you *will* bind yourself to a young man who has everything to do for himself. His people won't help him; they are not too well pleased. And then they haven't anything, in spite of their position."

Margaret smiled happily.

"I am not afraid. George will understand."

The mother sighed.

"I can't understand you. You won't marry M. de Montville, and yet you will let him give you the furs!"

The girl's face softened.

"There's no lie in them," she said with her cheek on the muff. "They just mean that he felt kindly to me—that the hurt is gone. He knows that I would do anything—but one thing—to make it the least bit easier for him. Money isn't anything; it's that he thought of me so beautifully. Why, I should be ungenerous not to take them!" She turned wondering eyes on her mother. "It would hurt him so if I sent them back. I love them, dear, glorious things!" She stood for a moment irresolutely. Then she bent over and kissed her mother.

"You don't think I'm dreadful, do you?" she pleaded.

"No, dear, I hope not," said Mrs. Dale with a troubled sigh.

Margaret walked gaily through the sharp, dry air, delightedly conscious of the pleasant warmth of her furs. She was imagining how George would look when he saw her in them. She was not able to pretend to herself that she did not know she looked well. "George won't object. He never did do things by halves, and he says I am right to

feel as I do about M. de Montville. George is so fine." The streets were alive; the close packed snow of street and sidewalk sparkled; the air was full of the melody of sleigh bells. Margaret could hardly keep her feet still for sober walking.

She stopped at last before a square gray house on Sherbrooke Street. With its blank façade of shaded windows, it looked gloomy even in the gay brilliance of the day. The door opened noiselessly. Pierre stood there in quiet livery. His face wrinkled with pleasure when he saw her.

"Ah, mademoiselle, it goes very badly," he replied to her question with a melancholy shake of the head. "He has not slept at all—not at all. But he is going to be very glad to see you—*mon pauvre petit M'sieu Jean*." The girl smiled at him affectionately as he pattered before to announce her.

At the threshold of M. de Montville's room Margaret paused, half dazed, as she always was, at the sudden transition from the gloom of the stiff English halls to the mellow glow within. The low western sun gleamed through the drawn linen shades and hangings of yellowed Irish lace. It touched the warm tan of the walls into amber. Everywhere were deep red and malachite green and golden tan interwoven and blended until the room was warm and rich with unobtrusive color. Every detail, grown out of the daily uses of a man who had, together with the feeling for beauty and the knowledge that chastens taste, the opportunity to choose, at once challenged and satisfied.

Near one of the further windows a low couch was drawn and on it Margaret distinguished De Montville. His hand, dragged down by the weight of a book, had fallen on the couch; his eyes were closed. In the midst of the soft magnificence of color in his dressing gown and the silk prayer rug thrown over him, his face was terrifyingly white and drawn. As Margaret hesitated at the door, he opened his eyes. It was as if something inanimate had come into sudden, vigorous life. He

smiled at her tenderly and without surprise.

"You are late today, *ma petite*," he said, with a nervous hand at his mustache. M. de Montville's mustache was white now. He no longer had the desire for his bitter jest at youth.

Margaret crossed the room and knelt down beside the couch. "Your beautiful gift detained me," she said. "Do you see how glad I am?" And she kissed him on his forehead. De Montville trembled and lay for a minute with closed eyes. When he opened them there was no emotion in them, nothing but kindly pleasure. He took her hand and carried it to his lips. In the act was the fine glamour of delicate sentiment.

"I could not gild the rose," he said, looking at the glowing face above him, "but I could give it a setting. Stand up again. Let me savor the one pleasure without a sting that my money has been able to buy. Let me see my—daughter." And Margaret, who had never needed to learn to interpret subtleties, did not perceive the effort of the word.

So she turned round and round and walked up and down the room—with something of a strut, it must be confessed. And over the face of the sick man, as he watched her loveliness, drifted the shadow of an unfulfilled dream. He had not resigned her, as Margaret thought; he was not reconciled. He had made her think so, for he could not live without seeing her. And that she might come every day—like the child she still was in many things—he had done much excellent dissembling.

He was not yet without hope. Day by day he had been strengthening his hold on her—some day she might forget her scruples. This grasping at the veriest straw of happiness—that she might bear his name and live within his home—had come to be as imperative a passion as had been the most arrogant demand of his youth. Shut up in the perfumed warmth of his room, with little beyond weakness to remind him of death, all his desire now was to

lie there and dream of what he desired, and waking, find it true. Then, with Margaret to make the dreaming painless, slip away. The thought that another man might some day come into Margaret's life had, of course, confronted him, but he had driven it away. Above all, he refused to think of Benson.

"Sit here by me, *ma petite*," he said, moving aside the light bed stand that stood at his elbow, "and tell me how it goes, thy world." Her furs and hat laid aside, the girl sat down on a low stool and rested her head against the couch. He shifted himself with difficulty and laid his hand on her hair. It had always been a delicate hand, and now it was bleached. The faint blue under the nails was hidden by Pierre's skillful tinting and polishing. De Montville was exquisite. His white hair was thick and wavy still; an atmosphere of fragrant linen enveloped him. Margaret smiled at him affectionately, and began the recital that was always expected of her. The dignified old housekeeper—who loved her, too—came in on her visit of ceremony; old Pierre trotted fussily in and out; the girl chattered on.

There was a pause. Margaret had been talking of everything but the one thing that filled her heart. She had found it hard to tell him of her betrothal. Today she felt that he must be told. And she dreaded it. She had said to herself that this fear was very foolish, that M. de Montville, being so ill, had forgotten. He had been different for a long time, sweet and tender and fatherly—Margaret did not remember her own father. Yet her tone was not quite natural when she said, very gently:

"You asked me about my world a little while ago. My world is larger now, larger and happier."

De Montville's heart contracted with foreboding of disaster. He gripped the sides of his couch. With all his social stoicism he could say nothing. Margaret looked at him, blushing, asking his help. He roused himself to the appeal.

"What has it then, thy world?" he managed to say between white lips.

"It has something new in it; it has—love and"—she raised her eyes and looked at him bravely—"George Benson."

He was quite prepared by the time she spoke the name.

"Ah, *c'est un bon garçon*, thy George Benson," he murmured evenly. "I owe him—much kindness—that he saved my life. I will write him my felicitations."

Margaret drew a long breath. It was over, and there had been nothing to fear after all. She was silent with the greatness of her relief. And it was well she was. De Montville was at the end of his power to fend and parry.

That life should have had this in ambush for him! And when so short a respite would have allowed him to die, not knowing!

A vision of Benson, flushed, magnificent, bending over him by the roadside at Sainte Valérie, dogged his imagination. He dwelt on himself, as he knew he was, drawn, gray, old—at<sup>1</sup> the limp, helpless body! He would always have to remember that the man had saved his life. This man who had youth, health, beauty, and now was to have—for the asking—Margaret and love! He hated until he wrung his hands together under the rug.

If it were not for the disease that chained him! If it were not for that! With a fair field—yes, even with his years—he would win. Margaret and he were mates in largeness of nature—in all save the accident of years. Was that the only barrier? Some trace of Huguenot blood in him challenged him there. If he had not burnt out his life so that nothing remained but the spirit to be crucified and a longing for happiness to be forever denied, he could have won. A breath out of past histories came to reassure him there. He knew his power. He could have won.

Margaret found him abstracted. He told her that he was tired. Thinking that he might sleep, she left him.

## XIII

AFTER a night and a day that De Montville shuddered to remember, the reaction had come. A skillful physician to his own case, he had taken care that the pain should not be beyond endurance. His method of treatment, successful though it was, was not in the books. Out of the ruins of one dream he built himself another. With his eyes resting mysteriously on the desk of old buhlwork he had picked up in Quebec, he waited for Margaret. And while he waited the new plan he had formed merged imperceptibly into the old, well trodden paths of reverie.

*. . . The prince burst in. His young shapeliness was proclaimed by the brave garments he wore; his hair waved thick and golden; his eyes were confidently blue. He strode before the princess, and the instant he had seen her he dropped reverently to his knee. The princess stirred. With her eyes still closed, she stretched out her pink palms to him. He bent over and whispered something in her ear, stirring her hair. When she smiled rosily in her sleep, he took courage and kissed her. And when she woke and they moved into each other's arms, it was so beautiful to see that all the knights and ladies woke to see it, and waking, wept.*

*Then he who dreamed saw that they were not really knights and ladies, but pilgrims, weary and bent with many ills. There were crutches and bandages and sad faces in plenty among them. In their midst stood the gracious figure of Sainte Jeanne, and her hands were outstretched in blessing. He pressed near to make his prayer. But she smiled at him so sadly that he knew it was denied. . . .*

De Montville stirred impatiently. It was not thus he would dream. For—in the present he could still see Margaret. And in the future he had just forged a stronger bond. His eyes turned again to the desk. There his will would be found. By it he could give all that was his—all that did not descend to his cousin of De Montville who would come after him at Lanaraïs—to Margaret. He knew how gener-

ous her gratitude was—he gloated over the recollection of her joy in the furs. In her gratitude he would be remembered and canonized.

His mind passed over the discordant thought of Benson. Perhaps, when Margaret had tried all life, she might come to be wholly his, De Montville's, his Margaret, nourished on his bounty, in gratitude, cherishing his memory above living things.

"I am building my last castle—for her," he thought whimsically. "After all the pursuing—and the finding—I am building it at last." Then he fell to designing a robe for his princess in which she would be as lovely as rosy-fingered Aurora. She would hold everything from him; she would owe to him all the pleasures for which her simple life had kept her unspoiled. And she would remember.

"My last castle!" he thought dreamily. The words pleased him. They brought memories to him out of his romance-haunted boyhood. It was always at the last castle that the knight made his desperate stand. And just as it was always the third door, the last wish, the third son, that was favored of fate, so it was at the last castle, against overwhelming odds, that the beleaguered knight was able to beat back his foes. There, too, he—

"But it is there that I must yield," thought De Montville sadly, all the glory of the dream which he had so laboriously fashioned fading. His eyes turned again to the desk. "And Marguerite will live in the castle I have built, not with my memory, but with him!" His hate surged back in a choking flood. Was there no weapon that he could seize out of the wreckage of the battle, nothing with which he could strike? The insolent happiness of the man who was going to take away from him the one thing he loved!

He called up the picture of Benson as he had last seen him, flushed, magnificent, bending over him in a pose of triumph. Hate stimulated him; his mind worked with feverish rapidity. The will—the deed to the last castle—he stopped to chuckle at the fancy—the

thing that he had weakly meant to be the sign of his yielding. The desperate fancy seized him that out of this he might fashion something that could hurt!

He thought quickly. It ought to be easy to find a plan. He knew of but one advantage—and that he would use. Before the subtlety of his mind Benson would be helpless. What if De Montville did lie on his bed more pitiful than a baby, since with him helplessness was suffering? The other man might have force but—De Montville smiled contemptuously to himself in the darkness as he reckoned the chance of the slow-witted youth against the searching power of his own imagination. It would be easy to find Benson's vulnerable point. He would have to have the fellow with him to discover it. That would not be easy to endure—but it would be necessary to make the Englishman fond of him. That done, it would be amusing to make him act out his worst self, the self that lies in every man, before Margaret. That for a beginning—while he was deciding what to do. Oh, Benson should dance prettily to his piping!

Then De Montville rang for Pierre and his cordial.

#### XIV

"MARGUERITE," said De Montville half an hour later, "is it not that I should know better thy George Benson?"

Margaret laughed with pleasure. Then she assumed proper seriousness. "I think you would like him, M. de Montville," she said demurely.

"It is decreed that I should do it. There is no choice, since thou, my daughter, hast chosen him—for thou art, of a sort, my daughter."

Margaret nodded. "I don't remember my own father. But I'm afraid," she added, laughing, "that you would find George an unruly son-in-law. You see, George much prefers to do everything for himself."

De Montville caught at the suggestion. "A good trait, is it not?" he asked.

Margaret tried to look critical.

"In moderation, it is," she said sagely; "but George is fanatical about his independence. He hates to receive anything—especially from women. He wants to do everything, and then do all the giving himself."

De Montville was looking interested.

"Now, you know, I'm different," Margaret went on brightly. "When I love people and they love me I could keep on taking, taking, so long as it made them happy to give. And I would just pay them back by loving as hard as I could. If I had anything, there wouldn't be any happiness like giving—so why not take? But there is something in George that makes him able only to give. He must be the one to manage, and then be very, very tender. An aunt of his offered to send him abroad to study in Germany, but he wouldn't have it. I think he was really out of humor with her about it." Margaret laughed with proud indulgence.

De Montville was thinking. "I knew it—he is ungenerous. It is only the great that know how to receive—anyone can give. How if it should be in that way that he be made to suffer?"

He pressed Margaret so eagerly to arrange a meeting between Benson and himself that she promised to bring her lover the next day. "If he will come," she thought to herself fearfully.

It needed, in fact, a great deal of effort to persuade Mr. George Benson to appear. He had his old distrust of De Montville—softened, to be sure, for it was much easier to like people since he had known that Margaret loved him. He had a boyish fear of illness—he probably felt instinctively how much he would be moved by it. But, more than all, he dreaded a scene—and it seemed that one might be probable. Argument did not move him in the least. But when Margaret, disappointed in her desire to bring the two men together, began to look grieved, Benson yielded eagerly.

It was late in the afternoon when Pierre ushered them into the room where De Montville lay. Pierre, who

considered that Mam'selle Marguerite had the divine right to command the house, was distrustful of Benson and admitted him grudgingly. Margaret was blushing and quite incapable of hiding her pride. The room was dim after the hard, bright light of the street, and Benson, feeling much too large for his environment, stumbled over a hassock. De Montville, who lay with his back to them, waiting for them to come beside him, frowned.

"Is he, then, all feet?" he asked himself irritably. "And is it this I have promised myself to endure and often! *Mon Dieu*, how often?" But when De Montville spoke, his voice had a quality that instantly attracted the young man. It seemed merely the charm of perfect courtesy. It was that—and something much more deliberate.

"Marguerite, *mon enfant*, it is thou? Thou hast brought with thee thy Monsieur Benson? It should also be *my* Monsieur Benson, since he saved my life."

Benson's air of possession when he helped Margaret off with her furs—De Montville's furs—infuriated the Frenchman. Yet, with the complexity that was part of his power and weakness as well, he vibrated like a harp to the touching beauty of the lovers. When they were beside him he lifted his hand with difficulty. George found himself clasping it warmly. No one could have resisted the smile or the almost timid friendliness in the brilliant eyes. But when their hands met, De Montville shuddered as if the north wind had burst into the room. He gave the young man one guarded look and turned away. The youth in Margaret never hurt him; it healed. But this!

He forced himself to speak as he had planned:

"When this Marguerite of ours—but I forget that to you she is the English 'Margaret'; to me the other name is sweeter; it is a little of what she is—when she told me of your most beautiful secret, I felt that we must know each other. We must be alike in something if she honors us both with her

affection. You see, *mon garçon*, I will not admit that I, the old man, have not also some claims!" He laughed gaily. "Will you be generous, my friend, as you are strong? Oh, yes—you *are* strong." And he eyed Benson's proportions admiringly. It would have taken a bitter cynic indeed to have refused him confidence. Their hands were joined a second time—this time it was a frank offer of Benson's that brought them together.

"Will you not sit here, by me—or better, Marguerite, will you not sit on your hassock here between us? In that way I can imagine her a little girl, as our ferry woman once thought her. Dost thou remember her, Marguerite, on the drive to Sainte Jeanne?" He smiled at her paternally. "We look almost for her dolls? You know what she is to yourself, my dear George Benson—ah, the beautiful youth! But you cannot know what she has been to me—sunshine, comforter, she has been something to make me again believe."

Benson looked at Margaret. His heart was full and he worshiped her. But Margaret was red and half angry with embarrassment. She looked reproachful. De Montville came to her rescue.

"For another reason you must come to me—since I cannot come to you. Do I not have some claim upon you—when you saved my life? It is not your fault that it has proved to so little purpose. You should help me to make it more tolerable." He disposed of his infirmities with a gay little gesture. In doing so he dislodged—purposely—the book he had been reading. Benson picked it up.

"Thank you, my friend; you see it is my guests that must wait on me." The cheerfulness of his tone did not accord with the wistfulness of his eyes. "And may I ask you to replace my rug? I feel already the evening chill."

Benson pulled up the cover with anxious awkwardness. He began to experience with the little service—as De Montville intended he should—the tenderness that any strong being feels for helplessness. De Montville closed

his eyes that he might not betray himself when Benson touched him.

"If he had not been here, Marguerite would have done it," he thought. "And it would have been her hand that touched my shoulder."

For a long time the three sat together in the glowing room, while the beauty, the amber light, influenced even George Benson's unesthetic soul. Pierre brought lights in with the tea things—for while they talked the afternoon had worn to five o'clock, and the room was growing dusky. De Montville had adopted the English "five o'clock" as he did every foreign custom that pleased him.

Margaret made tea for the two men with a pleasant sense of her importance. In her happiness and in her delight in the service she seemed to unite them. Watching her, they exchanged glances of affectionate indulgence. De Montville set himself to charm his guests. His fund of adventure, his skill as a *raconteur*, the sunny stretches of humor, these were the materials with which he worked. He intended that the young people should so expand in the pleasant atmosphere, it should be so well with them, that together they would come again and again. It was necessary that they should. As for the rest, it was possible that Margaret herself had given him the cue.

There was a moment's silence. Into it M. de Montville's voice fell with significance:

"I have something yet to say. I fear that you will think me an intriguer when you know that it was not wholly gratitude nor yet Marguerite that makes me wish to know better M. George Benson. I have a service to ask of him; he will assist me with my property and investments." He paused. He surveyed the two faces before him, Margaret's pleased and expectant, Benson's surprised and—yes—flattered. De Montville patted Margaret's face indulgently.

"But these affairs of business must be men's work. Little maidens must not trouble their pretty heads over them. Tomorrow, M. Benson, will you

not come to see me in the morning? Then we can talk without danger of *ennui* to our Marguerite."

With an indescribable mingling of satisfaction and pain, he observed that Margaret was hurt at being excluded from the conference. But Benson, in his eagerness, saw nothing. From both of these facts De Montville argued well for his plans.

## XV

GEORGE BENSON was speechless for a moment when De Montville made his offer. When he could speak he blurted out:

"But, M. de Montville—you don't know that I am capable of doing it!"

De Montville smiled. "I am not afraid. I have some skill in understanding people. I think that you will have great capability in affairs and that my property will be admirably conducted."

"But what reason have you for thinking so?" Benson urged. "I don't want you to give the business to me and be disappointed. I might make a mess of it. I have only begun my law course. What is it that gives you confidence in me?"

"Well, my friend—you have managing hands," De Montville laughed.

The young man looked down incredulously at his broad, muscular hands with the square, straight fingers. Suddenly he challenged De Montville.

"What reason have you for this? You don't want to—help me, do you? Is it because of Margaret?" There was resentment in his tone.

De Montville meditated. Evidently it would require more skill than he had supposed to manage this stubborn boy.

"No, no, not that. You must, then, have the whole story. I am weary, my friend, with the weight of everything. And of late my investments have not been as fortunate as before. An ill man—as I am—loosens his grasp. And again it gives me pain to see things go badly, for I am by nature orderly and prudent—in affairs. I, then, for some time have said to myself: 'Thou must

discover some younger man who is honest and—like thyself—prudent and—unlike thyself—strong. On him thou canst unburden the weight that is no longer for thee. It is better that he should be a young man, for such a one, having his fame to make, will be spurred to activity. Even if at first he must be guided a little, it is better.' For a long time I have been seeking. But what can I do, in bed, shut in? At last, after the accident at Sainte Valérie, I thought of you. I have inquired. And I have found that—not if I had been out in the world of men could I have better chosen. If I had not been so ill, I would have sent for you before. Are you now satisfied?" He smiled at Benson winningly. But something had aroused a new doubt in the Englishman's mind.

"You are sure it isn't any notion of—gratitude because of that accident?" he asked, flushing uncomfortably. "I wouldn't like that. I would rather stand on my own merits."

De Montville turned his face away and frowned. Benson irritated him almost beyond endurance. When he looked up again he was pale.

"Will you not believe that I need your services?" he said pleadingly. "All this fatigues me—and I cannot suffer fatigue with safety. It is not from gratitude; it is because I can no longer support the burden of conducting my affairs and because I have confidence in your honor. Will you not believe me—and without more talking?" He sank exhaustedly into his cushions; there was a blue stain around his mouth.

Benson leaned forward impulsively and took his hand.

"I beg your pardon," he said remorsefully. "I'm an awful ass to make you talk so much. You see—really it's cruel to make you listen any longer, but I have to have everything above board. I think I had some idiotic kind of distrust of you; I misjudged you—I feel as if I couldn't take up this thing without your knowing that. And then I hate to have people do things for the sake of doing something for me. But

if you think I can serve you—there's no length I wouldn't go to, now; and I'll account for every penny."

De Montville nodded his head wearily in answer and pressed Benson's hand feebly.

"Tomorrow I will get out the papers, and we will go over as many as possible—tomorrow—at this time. But now—you will pardon me if I can talk no longer."

Benson took up his hat, awkwardly afraid of every movement. He took De Montville's listless hand in his, timidly, fearing that he might hurt him. At the door he turned, his strong teeth gleaming in a frank smile.

"I say, M. de Montville, it's a rattling good thing for me, you know, this business. It brings things a little nearer." And his efforts to shut the door quietly made him knock over a chair.

## XVI

It was evident to De Montville in the weeks that followed that, had he had no other motive than a business one, his choice of a factor was a good one. Benson had a grasp of detail, and clear vision. He was a born executive; the direction of property gave him the pleasure that a general feels in moving his forces past obstacles to victory. De Montville had not intended to give the young man more than nominal control; in spite of his illness, the Frenchman had never slackened his hold on his business interests. He was shrewd and careful. But Benson surpassed him—his was the genius. Therefore, more and more authority was placed in his hands. De Montville's revenues had even begun to increase after a few weeks of Benson's incumbency.

It was after the achievement of this financial miracle that Margaret, in her room, was dressing for the street. As she was putting on her furs, Mrs. Dale came into the room.

"I met Mrs. Benson downtown," she said. Mrs. Dale could never speak of this lady without overconsideration.

The uncontaminated professionalism of the Benson family, descending from father to son, always brought to her an uneasy consciousness of her late husband's retail shop. While she wistfully favored M. de Montville and his millions, she never dared openly to oppose the scion of the superior Bensons.

"They are very much delighted over George's management of M. de Montville's estate. They say he is doing wonders with it."

"Yes, he is very clever," said Margaret without enthusiasm.

"Mrs. Benson says it is wonderful to see how absorbed he is. But she says that George is always like that. He throws himself with his whole heart into the thing he is doing."

"Yes, Mrs. Benson is always saying that about him." There was impatience in Margaret's tone. "I don't believe she ever says anything else."

Mrs. Dale threw a quick look at her daughter. George had not been to the house so often recently. And Margaret had been somewhat silent. Could it be—

"You never told me what George thought of your furs," she said with a great effect of spontaneity.

"No, mother, I didn't."

"Well—what did he say?"

Margaret looked at her mother helplessly. She was seeking a way to escape the inquisition, but there was none. Mrs. Dale, with quiet persistence, was expecting an answer.

"He didn't say anything. The first day I wore them before him was the day I took him to see M. de Montville. And he was so vexed at having to go that he couldn't see anything. And—since then he has been—too busy." Margaret hastened to pin on her veil, winking desperately; she wished, above everything, to hide from her mother the wretched little hurt that was in her heart. She went out of the room to avoid further questions. But one followed her down the stairs:

"Why don't you go in the morning to see M. de Montville now? I thought the morning was always the best time for invalids."

"Why—you see, George goes to see him then on business." Margaret hoped that this would be enough. But the silence above her was full of question. "I felt—in the way, you know. They have so much to talk about that I don't understand." Then in a tone which she bravely tried to make full of enthusiasm: "George is perfectly fascinated with M. de Montville. Isn't it lovely?" And she closed the hall door in a hurry lest another question might follow.

In the street Margaret scolded herself.

"What makes you so childish and so little?" she demanded with scorn. "Isn't this just what you wanted? Isn't it delightful that M. de Montville appreciates him? And George has given up his prejudices. And this is just the opportunity he needed. It's natural for him to be absorbed; men have to be. It's because he is so strong and clever that he is so eager about it. And he is working for a—home."

Margaret was trying to live up to the height demanded by her ideals. But George's devotion to things other than herself had meant loneliness to her. She had felt superfluous—she who was used to being the center of interest to both these men! On the one side was the astonishing interest which De Montville manifested in George; on the other side, George was clearly under the dominion of De Montville's fascination. Neither of them seemed to need her.

De Montville had seen her trouble more clearly than she had herself. It was the beginning of the discord that he desired. He had made Benson his agent with no more definite plan than to have the young man near while he discovered how he could bestow his property in the way that would make the acceptance of it most difficult to Benson—and most beneficent to Margaret. As the weeks stretched to months and the spring was imminent, his plan had become clearer. Stewardship was developing in Benson the illusion of ownership. He identified

himself so completely with De Montville's interests that they became his interests. De Montville detected in him an involuntary irritability when the owner attempted to interfere in the factor's plans. It was not the lust of possession; it was the lust of management. He had the artist's delight in his work when he made of farms and houses and factories a beautiful, orderly, producing mechanism. He had, too, the artist's jealous contempt of interference.

"How will it be," thought De Montville exultantly, "when this youth, who hates to receive things from women, can hold all this but as fief of his wife?"

Rightly or wrongly, the answer seemed to him obvious. "He will show himself an ingrate before her," he thought happily. "He will dance prettily to my piping."

The fact that all this would take place after his death made little difference in his enjoyment of the spectacle. De Montville had become mystic through much brooding; the dividing line between life and death had become impalpable. He had lived too long on its borders to respect it. He believed that, wherever he existed, he would know and exult. He felt that the spirit of him would leap with as fierce a delight as though he were like Benson, young and confident of possessing her. Of the outcome he had no doubt. It meant division before marriage or wreck after—Benson's ruin soon or late. Their love might struggle for a time between Benson's fanatical independence and Margaret's hurt womanhood. But it would go down. And he would know it!

"I am building my last castle," brooded De Montville. "After all the seeking and the finding, I am building it at last. Marguerite is enthroned in it—the chatelaine I sought and found too late. She rules, nourished by my bounty, cherishing my memory, knowing her mate. There she blooms, my morning glory princess—all brown and rose. There she lives—and waits."

## XVII

"THE apple blossom love is under sentence of frost," thought De Montville sadly, with his unfortunate capacity for suffering in sympathy with the one he intended to injure.

"*Entrez!*" he cried eagerly. It was Margaret whom Mrs. Milner was bringing to him. He knew it, as he always did. Margaret came to the foot of his couch where he could see her. Her face was flushed; she had been walking fast and the day was warm. For a moment De Montville forgot to be on his guard; his black eyes betrayed the love he was forbidden to express.

When she had laid aside her wraps he saw that she wore a pink blouse.

"I am glad you wore rose color today," he said dreamily. "*Couleur de rose—couleur de joie.*" An assurance of coming joy flashed upon him. "Art thou not well today, Marguerite?" he asked tenderly, as, the flush having faded from her face, she sat down wearily.

"I am a little tired," she said, forcing herself to brightness. "It's the spring—it's stirring in the air. I wish you could get out to feel it. See—I brought you these; I couldn't resist them." She unpinned from her muff a bunch of fragrant violets and put them in his hands.

"Violets to hold, and rose color and thy eyes to see. I need no more of the spring than that," he said. And then he lay content for a moment. But something made him restless, a longing that today would not be deadened. He looked at her wistfully and his lips trembled. He put out his delicate invalid's hand and touched hers timidly.

"Still, it seems to me, Marguerite, that thou art not happy. Wilt thou not tell me?"

She stirred uneasily.

"I am a little depressed—for no reason, I think. Perhaps I am not quite well. I can't shake it off."

"But thy George Benson, he goes always well? Such zeal, such concentration, such promise for the future!"

The shadow in her eyes deepened.  
"Yes, that is all true," she said.

An unlooked-for possibility of joy electrified De Montville. Her depression was evident. What if the discord he looked for should come before, not after, his death? What would that mean for him?

"Does he not give you happiness, Marguerite?" he asked sympathetically.

The tenderness in his tone compelled her confidence. She forgot to be reserved.

"Oh, M. de Montville," she said miserably, "something is wrong. I am not happy. I know I ought to be. It is—little—to feel hurt as I do. But I can't help it." She looked at him helplessly.

"Tell me, Marguerite." De Montville hardly dared trust his voice.

"He—leaves me—alone. He doesn't come to see me for days. He is so absorbed in his work that I—feel as if he had—forgotten me." She turned her face away.

Excitement made it difficult for De Montville to remain still. The breach had opened! It needed only a little suggestion—and Margaret would see. The certainty of happiness passed through him like a warm current. It was to be! It was to be! Joy had found him out! She would see. She would come to him. What a singing triumph life would be! How wonderful! He felt his strength coming back; he raised himself on his couch. He would live—recover. Health was as nothing—to be had for an effort of the will, once happiness was assured.

Margaret struggled for composure. She held her lips stiffly to prevent their trembling.

"You see, we love each other," she said. "We belong to each other—we felt we did; but, somehow, there are times when we—don't. There is my mother to worry—and his people are not pleased. They wanted so much more for him. It —comes between us; it almost spoils—love." She hesitated before "love"—it was too wonderful a word to speak easily. De Montville waited breathlessly.

Margaret went to the window and looked out. Between a gap in the houses opposite flamed the sunset. She looked until her eyes were full of the gold-shot gorgeousness. Then she turned around. A wave of feeling had swept aside her shyness.

"Oh, M. de Montville," she said, "everyone says the same thing: we have our whole lives; we should be prudent—wait. But we haven't our whole lives. We have just now to feel as we do. Why, I grudge his not being here to see the sunset with me. The color will fade in a minute and we will miss this one all our lives. We will not have known what it was to be together seeing it."

"Poor little girl," he said lightly. "And her vine-covered cottage!"

Margaret came back from the window and sat down beside him.

"I think I haven't told you quite all," she said. And De Montville's hope flared up. "Lately there has been something else. I think perhaps I don't quite know how to look at things. Perhaps I am too exacting. But ever since George began that work for you he has been so busy, so absorbed, that I feel deserted, hurt. Now isn't that silly?" she laughed forlornly. "It's just my own selfishness. His work is all for me—for our home. Any-one would think I ought to be content. But you know I am so different. I could work, work, work, to help things along—I am doing lots of sewing and I love it—but he is still above and over it all, every minute of the time. I never forget him, even when I am hem-stitching—and you know you have to keep your mind right on that. I know he loves me—but sometimes it seems to me that he loves his work more. He doesn't get to see me every day. And he's drowned in work. He can't think of me and be so intense over outside things. He can't. He's preoccupied when we're together. And I'm so unhappy I don't know what to do! I can't be with him and be happy when more than half of him is somewhere else. If it were some girl, even, I don't believe I would feel so hurt!" She

laughed hysterically. "He's fascinated with you, too. I believe I'm jealous of you as much as of the work—if it isn't all one. Now do you think I am worth pitying?" she demanded defiantly.

De Montville was putting off the moment. He must ask it at last—the question.

"Do you, then, love this George Benson?" he asked with solemnity. And he waited for his answer.

"Love him?" she repeated. "Why, I—" Her face scorched and she hid it in her hands. The clock on De Montville's desk ticked out many heavy seconds while he waited. He flinched when she raised her head and looked him in the eyes. Her girlish shame was gone. There was impersonal gravity in her expression. It was her confidence that De Montville had forgotten his own desire that made her cruel.

"I love him in a way that I never foresaw when I loved him first. I—I am never really happy when he is away from me. I am not happy when he is with me unless we are feeling together—unless he is loving me—wholly. And then it is a fearful, troubled sort of pleasure. When he is thinking—just of me—and looks at me in a way he has—I tremble and am weak. But at the same time I am exultant, for I know I would be strong to do—to bear anything for him. And when he laughs—in a way he has; I can't describe it—life seems so rich, so throbbing, so reckless, it makes me—" She paused in confusion. The words would not come; they were beyond her knowledge.

But De Montville knew. He met her eyes, and there passed between them a thrill of understanding. She knew how to love—and he had thought her a child. Homemaker by the fireside and joyous thing of the open—she was both. He had thought her a child, and she knew how to love—he held her eyes while again the knowledge of kindred beings passed between them. He held her eyes another moment, exultant in the richness of her womanhood.

Then rage seized him! It was for the other man, the man he hated.

De Montville saw him as he had swung into the room that morning, broad and square, wholesome in his gray tweeds, active and forceful. And the boyish gold of his hair, his untroubled blue eyes, the manly strength of his curved lips—De Montville had a sudden revelation of how desperately he might attract. And this was the man with whom he, a sick man, had played, whom he had made dance as he pulled the strings of destiny. And she loved him. Yes, she loved him now. But it needed only a little nursing of Benson's faults from the man who understood. The discord had begun. Margaret and he were mates. He hated the man. He held the power. They both trusted him. He had no doubt of his course.

He rested in the vision of the life that would come when at last she turned to him—of the quick response to thought that was in her, the poetic insight, the sincerity, the power of loving. And—only for a moment did he permit himself, for De Montville was reverent with her as a youth with his maiden—he thrilled as he dreamed of the touch of her lips. He threw off his years of illness. He was going to sit up. He raised himself and put aside the rugs.

"M. de Montville," said a voice beside him, "can he really love me and forget me so?"

The voice seemed to come from a great distance. De Montville scarcely understood.

"If he doesn't, I don't want to live."

He looked at her. There was tragic dignity in her face. There was passion in her eyes. She meant it. This love swallowed up for her the sum of happiness—as did his. He had not known that. In spite of the extravagance of her words, she would bear it; she was no weakling. But—what if she should be wounded and the wound should not heal?

He must answer her question. Only a moment's pause was possible before he must decide.

There had never been a conflict in

De Montville's mind when life had discovered to him a thing to desire. And all other desires had been but mist beside this. He had never loved her so vehemently. And with what a hatred he hated the man! He could destroy the man. And she would see how sordid a thing she had loved. But to make her suffer— He must think of her.

No—he couldn't give her up; he couldn't.

There was a hush in the room. Margaret waited.

### XVIII

"MARGUERITE!" said De Montville at last. He felt he had decided that he could not give her up. No one could expect him to suffer so. He had a right to a few days of happiness.

Margaret was trembling while she waited. He tried to go on, but halted. She raised her eyes to his. They were helpless. At last De Montville knew what he must do.

"Marguerite," he said abruptly. "He loves thee."

Margaret sighed.

"He is pure, he is strong, thy George Benson," De Montville went on dispassionately. "He has given thee the first love and the best. He has no past to regret and no future to fear. He is as beautiful as the Hermes of Praxiteles and as reverent before thee as a Greek before his oracle. But to win thee he has to fight, and of such essence is he made that he exults in the fight. He must do it. Thou must not hinder nor repine. For he carries into battle, set high on his forehead, his love for thee. By it and with it he must prevail. Love him"—his voice had fallen into solemn intensity—"love him and never doubt. He is silent sometimes when he should speak of his love; it is that he feels, and he is of those that cannot speak. But he will love thee forever—as another could not do; and thou must love him—" He paused, and turned his eyes on her—burning, hopeless. "For it is that way thy happiness lies."

Margaret met his eyes. With the suffering she had known she understood them. She knew at last that De Montville had never consented to his fate. He had loved her always. He had suffered day by day in her affection. He had been tortured while she had thought only of her happiness.

"Oh!" she cried, holding out her hands while the tears fell down her cheeks forgotten. Their eyes met with their hands in a long look of understanding.

### XIX

"*C'EST un monsieur qui se nomme Benson,*" said Pierre with doubt in his voice.

"I expected him, my Pierre," De Montville smiled at the old man. "It is the father of M. George Benson." But Pierre walked away, shaking his head dubiously.

The senior Benson came fussily in. He looked like an old gray badger, and surprise was in every line of his face. "You sent for me?" he asked unbelievingly. "I thought probably it was a mistake—that it was for my son."

"No; it was for you," said De Montville reassuringly. "Pierre will take your hat and stick. Will you not be seated?"

Mr. Benson took a seat, which he occupied in a provisional manner. There was a pause.

"It was about my testament—my will," began De Montville.

"My son is a notary public," Mr. Benson interrupted. He was jealous for his son's reputation.

"Yes, yes"—M. de Montville was consumed by a nervous energy that would not let him rest. "But it would not be possible that he should make the will." He paused. "The testament concerns him too intimately."

Mr. Benson looked up incredulously.

"Sir?"

"I wish to make your son my chief beneficiary." De Montville was impatient of the necessity of explaining.

"George? But he has no reason to expect such a thing! It would be absurd—impossible!" The stubborn in-

dependence which, in the son, had so enraged De Montville, spoke in the father's startled face. But in him it did not displease the Frenchman. He smiled at him in friendly fashion.

"I have my reasons."

"But Miss Margaret Dale—everyone supposed that since—" He stopped, stammering.

"Again I must say I have my reasons for preferring to leave my *biens* to your son." De Montville was nervous. There was so much to be done. Mr. Benson subsided into his chair, unconvinced.

"I must tell you," began De Montville, his brows contracting as he remembered the earlier interview with the independent son of an independent father. He went over the arguments which he had used to influence George to become his agent.

"I wish to feel that my property will be in good and prudent hands," he concluded. "It would hurt me to feel that there might be loss, waste. And with your son I would feel sure. He is most capable. He will be a man of affairs."

"But that is no reason. I don't understand. Is there no one of your family?"

"Lanaraïs is entailed on the De Montville who will succeed me—my cousin. We are not friends," said De Montville drily. "It is my own property in this country of which I speak, my mother's." He moved restlessly on his couch.

"But Miss Dale—everyone expected—"

"She herself has not thought of herself at all." De Montville spoke proudly.

"She ought to have it, though."

De Montville looked at Mr. Benson almost affectionately. "It will be the same for her. She will marry your son."

"Yes, but—the women make it hard for her. His mother is ambitious for him. The girl ought to have the whip hand to make things right. I have done what I could. I like her. But a man can't do much in these things."

De Montville turned and faced him.

"But you must do much. It is for that I have sent for you. You must make her position what it ought to be. I am doing what I propose to do because I think it will be for the best. Your son would not be happy to hold his property from his wife. He would rebel against a false position."

The father looked up with a twinkle of appreciation.

"Let the young rascal learn to take his medicine, then. Don't make things too easy for him."

"It is not for him that I would make things easy," flashed De Montville. "And how would it be for you in his case?"

Mr. Benson chuckled, convinced.

"All the same, I won't countenance it."

"Still, it must be," De Montville repeated patiently. "Otherwise there would not be happiness between them. Marguerite would not be happy. It is for Marguerite that I am doing this."

Mr. Benson met the sick man's eyes. He comprehended. He gripped his hand in silent appreciation. He cleared his throat once or twice.

"I'll see to it," he promised, his big hand still holding that of De Montville. "The little girl shall be happy with us. I always liked her," he added rather shamefacedly. "My wife does, too—really; I suppose no one could help it. But my wife knows how difficult it is without enough—no one likes to have children go through what we have ourselves. She will love Margaret like a daughter; I am sure of that."

"You will make the will, then, for me?" De Montville interrupted feverishly.

"No, no, I can't do that—my professional reputation, you know." Mr. Benson began to bluster again. "But I will give you the address of some good people. Allen & McDougal are a good firm."

"I must content myself, then, I suppose." De Montville smiled resignedly. He had accomplished what he wished to have done.

He had to wait what seemed to him

a long time after Mr. Benson had left before the lawyers he had sent for came. But he would not let himself dream. There was too much to plan.

"M'sieu Jean," said a voice. "Voici les messieurs." De Montville started. He roused himself with a sigh.

"Tu dis—"

"Les messieurs—les avocats."

De Montville turned his eyes on them with an effort.

"There were some matters," he said weakly. "Perhaps M. Benson has already explained to you—"

"Yes, we are prepared." A kindly voice came from a tall presence beside the bed.

"I will make one witness, and you can recall your man there for another," said the other voice. Pierre was going out of the door, looking sadly stooped and shrunken.

De Montville made an effort toward motioning them to be seated. "In a minute I will be ready."

In a minute he was alert and clear-minded. He recited slowly and distinctly a series of generous legacies—to Pierre and his wife Marie, who kept the chateau at Lanarais for his homecoming—enough to enable them to live comfortably after their frugal habit; to the other servants, to some of the companions of his young manhood. There was a sum for Margaret, "that she may make, with a companion, the voyage to the old chateau at Lanarais." Then—a pause; De Montville raised himself on his pillows.

"The rest of my estate, both real and personal, I give to my young friend, George Benson, for his services and as token of the—great love I bear him."

There was silence in the room while Mr. Allen wrote according to De Montville's directions. Then the pen was brought to the man on the bed, and he signed with a steady hand. Pierre was summoned and added his witnessing mark. A pause—while the three men stood around the bed, watching the sick man with the gravity that even strangers must feel at such moments, Pierre with nothing but twitching lips to show what he felt.

"There is still something," said De Montville in his clear voice. He signed to Pierre to bring to him the little desk of old French buhl. When it was at his elbow he himself opened the drawer and took out of it a document, folded and sealed. He held it over the shaded bedroom lamp which stood at his side. When it was burning Pierre took it from his hands and threw it on the hearth. De Montville watched it while it flamed into its last burst of brightness. To his clouded eyes it took on fantastic shapes—a writhing man—a smiling face—a castle turret. He gave a cry of pain. Pierre ran to him. The sick man's face was contorted, his hands clutching at his heart. Pierre, his face gray with fear, ran for stimulants.

It was midnight when the doctor raised his head from a last test of De Montville's heart. "He is safe now—for a few days," he said.

Dr. Hilton walked away with a sober face. "Strange!" he thought. "He was so much better. I had begun to think he might live for years."

## XX

THE next morning De Montville rallied.

"There is yet something that I must do," he said to Pierre. "Will you send for M. George Benson?"

And when Benson stood before him, he turned to the old valet.

"Now go and rest, my Pierre," he said, with the smile that only Pierre knew—for it reflected the memories that they shared.

When he turned to Benson a flicker of the hatred he felt for the young man was in his eyes. Benson, bending over him tenderly, thought that De Montville's mind wandered. But in a moment the sick man had control of himself.

"Yes, yes, I sent for you," he said impatiently, "and the time is short. Today I am not so well. And I have something still to do—today," he added, in answer to the fear on the young

## THE SMART SET

man's face. His voice died away; but he roused himself again—he brought all his strength to bear. He would not have to talk to him again; he would do what he had to do well—since he must do it.

"My friend"—he smiled at the young man—"I have lived longer than you—or Marguerite. I see things more clearly. And then there are mistakes that belong to your—temperament. You have wounded Marguerite—whom we both love." He smiled at Benson in a fatherly fashion.

Benson's face clouded over with perplexity. "Why, what—" he began.

"I will tell you all." De Montville was impatient. Benson was trying to his quick mind. It was wearisome to have always to explain.

"You have been busy, absorbed in your affairs. It is natural—to you; you must guard against its—excess—if you would make her happy. And you would make her happy—yes, yes, —I see that; you need not tell me. Women cannot always understand; they never forget—when they really love. They cannot understand how a man can lose himself in his work. I never did, I. And that is why I can see both ways. And one must understand—and be tender. Poor little Marguerite—she has been lonely."

Benson's face was disturbed with feeling. De Montville frowned in quick distaste. He would not let the young man speak.

"I saw it, and I made her tell me. You see, I want her to be happy. You must go to her, make her understand."

Now that there was silence, Benson could not speak. He had his hands clenched. He was hating himself. De Montville opened his eyes wearily.

"You will always be thoughtful of her—Marguerite? There are perhaps some ways in which I understand her better. You have not so much—imagination, perhaps. She is very tender, very loyal. She sees things not in their ugliness—it is rose color. You will understand better if I say she is an idealist. She has insight for things as they should be, not as they are.

And she has placed you before all the world. There can come no happiness to her but through you—that is the way she loves. And—yes, you love her, too, in your way."

The younger man looked up, and De Montville did not know the face. His eyes blazed—they were black—and his lips trembled.

"Yes, De Montville, I love her—in my way. And my way is to worship her—in white—apart from everything. I have worked like a devil, not daring to think of her for fear it would make me stop—an instant. For I would tear a place in the rock with my fingers so she could sit apart—and unsoiled. And I would walk through fire—it couldn't be much worse than crushing down the longing to be with her—to hold her in my arms at the other side. And all I have been able to do is to—hurt her!" He turned his back sharply on De Montville.

De Montville recoiled. The Englishman *could* love!

"Yes," he said, "but while you are doing all this, she may want to know what you are thinking—other than by telegraph." He laughed. Benson laughed with him as the Frenchman intended he should—comedy was less wearing.

"Now go to her, George Benson, even if it put off this triumphal consummation for an hour. And while you are toiling for the future do not let her get lonely in the present. You are"—De Montville gave himself the indulgence of expressing himself, knowing he would not be understood—"you are a very big fool, M. George Benson." Again they both laughed. Benson put out his hand—he loved De Montville. But the Frenchman, turned restive to his own self-control, refused to see it. He was hunting for his watch on the table by his elbow. And long after Benson had left, De Montville was exulting that he had escaped the final hypocrisy.

"Figure to thyself, my friend," he addressed himself airily. "Thou hast built for thyself a noble structure of thy intrigues—and pouf—in a breath—

it is for another man!" He laughed with a certain enjoyment.

"And it was to have been otherwise. Oh, the castle, Marguerite, which I built for thee! The castle in which thou wast to swell with the memory of him who built it—the poor prince who, searching for thee, wasted his birthright of royalty, but, before the God who sees me now, never loved until he found thee! The others were shadows, love, and if they mocked thy purity, they but lifted vaporish arms and mowed in mockery of themselves and thee. And they passed by as shadows. And I found thee, who would have been crowned by me, queen by my side, had I not spent the day before I found thee—in the night there is no crowning. And so I built the last castle—the chateau of dreams—where I, become a shadow, might dwell with thee in the peace I have never found. But that castle—"

Margaret, her cheek against her lover's shoulder, was saying:

"You make me ashamed of myself, dear. I could never forgive myself if I made you neglect other things for me. Indeed, I mean it. I was weak this time, George, but if you'll only forget it I will never be so foolish again."

Benson kissed her.

"I'm not going to take you at your word this time, sweetheart. It's sweet of you to say it—but then, everything you do is sweet—sweet—sweet." He emphasized the words as was most fitting.

"How many thousands of years is it going to be before I own you?" he broke out passionately. "Will you help me to keep on, Margaret, and not go out of my head with longing?"

She put up her hand and pushed back the heavy lock that had fallen over his forehead.

"Can't you be just a little happy—now—if I love you all the time?" she asked wistfully.

He swept her into his arms—but he kissed her very tenderly.

## XXI

"WHEN I love people and they love me, I could keep on taking, taking, as long as they were glad to give. And I would pay them by loving them as hard as I could." She said that, my Marguerite. And still I could not give it to her. He will have it all, youth and wealth—and her."

De Montville was alone. It was late in the afternoon. The light on the walls was amber; the air, in which there was a hint of spring moisture, swayed the curtains. Everything was done, and De Montville was tired, so tired that he could hardly hold his mind steady to follow his thought.

"She would have taken it so joyously, so lovingly—and she would have remembered. And now she will forget so soon that it came from me. Everything will come from him." A spasm of pain crossed his face. When it was over he lay quiet. There seemed no change in his thought, and yet—

. . . He left the castle. As he walked slowly along in the outer world he heard the trickling and running and rushing of water. He looked back. He saw that the castle was, after all, of ice, and that the ice was melting into clear, green streams. The streams gathered together until a broad, tranquil current flowed straight on, under the sun. And the land, which had for so long been a dreary waste, began to freshen into green. Green fields stretched endlessly before him. While there was still grief in his heart, he was strangely at peace. He began to look, as in his boyish wanderings, for cool wonders in the river pools and for some beauty that lay—just beyond. . . .

"There is something else I was thinking of." He groped in his memory. "It is—no—yes, it is that—surely it cannot be necessary that he should come with her—for the last time. But otherwise—if I send for her alone—will it seem fitting? I believe that I have been trying to make him believe that I was fond of him—him—that George Benson." He laughed weakly. "And so, how can I send for her alone? But

must I go without having her by me—or must I have them together? I am not a coward, Marguerite, but I thought I could have you with me—to help me die. But to have him—at the last—to carry out with me the memory of them—together—as they will always be—I cannot. Surely it cannot be expected of me." Tears gathered in the wistful eyes and slowly brimmed over and fell on the cheeks. He lay staring helplessly before him.

Old Pierre crept in. He hovered about, replaced the tumbled pillows with fresh ones, pulled up the coverlid and tucked it about his master's shoulders, rearranged the bedstand. Then he bent over De Montville, biting his lips as he saw his master's face:

"Let me get you your cordial, *mon cher petit M'sieu Jean*," he begged tenderly.

"Yes, yes, it is that, Pierre—*ah, mon bon Pierre!*" And he patted the old man's cheek. "It will help me to think. I need to think. Thou art always so—good to me, Pierre." Pierre shuffled out. He found the bottle, uncorked it, halted outside the door long enough to arrange a smile before a mirror. He raised his master's head. De Montville swallowed the cordial eagerly. After a time he opened his eyes.

"This is what I would ask of thee, *mon Pierre*," he said briskly. "Wilt thou send for Mademoiselle Marguerite—and Monsieur Benson? I would see them today before—before the lights are brought. Hasten!" In feverish impatience he gave Pierre a little push.

Pierre hesitated. He searched his master's face. "Will it not be too much for thy strength, M'sieu Jean?" he asked.

"But I must—"

"Shall I not bring them separately?" Pierre's eyes were carefully on the floor.

"*Oh, merci, merci bien, mon Pierre! C'est ça!*" cried De Montville joyously. "How thou art wise! Everyone would know that I would be too weak to see them together. And Mademoiselle Marguerite—"

"And Mademoiselle Marguerite—

first," said the old man tenderly. "After that, there will be time."

De Montville softly struck his hands together. "How thou art good to me, Pierre!"

Pierre hurried out to send one of the men.

"Yes, there will be time," De Montville repeated peacefully. He lay very quiet. There was a mysterious joy in his eyes. The room was still, and empty save of the man who lay exhausted on the couch. Against the gray of his face his mustache and hair gleamed with startling whiteness. But the eyes were brilliant still and alive.

"She will come," he thought, "and she will stand—there. There will be rose color in her face, and her eyes will be like clear pools of water in the shadowed wood. First she will smile. Then when she sees that I am ill—but I must be careful not to let her know how near the end, for that would distress her, and I cannot bear that; she has never been near to death—she will hurry up to me. And I will look deep in her eyes. And then, perhaps of her own desire—surely it is not too much to hope—now—she will lay her rose petal lips on mine—not on my forehead, but on my lips. And then—since I have suffered—perhaps *le bon Dieu* will let it be—then." He smiled happily, but he had stopped thinking.

Suddenly he felt himself sinking. He tried to ring the bell; he could not reach the rope. "Eh, bien," he thought tranquilly, "Pierre will soon be here." His thought wavered into vision.

. . . . He was not surprised when he came to his father's house on the Loire. It was spring—as he knew it would be, and the orchard was in drifts and billows of pink and white. The doors of his home were flung wide open—as they had always been to welcome him from his wanderings. But he had no wish to enter—yet. It was out in the open, under the smiling sky that he wished to be. And then—something awaited him in the orchard.

Over the grass that stretched away to the river, the blossoming trees behind her,

*she came. Some of the petals from the plum trees lay like snow upon her brown hair. She was a maiden, whose face, all rose color and brown, smiled with morning glory freshness. He looked into her eyes—there were no barriers—he could look all the way down into her heart. . . .*

He felt something hanging over him; he heard confused noises. Reluctantly he opened his eyes. Margaret was there; her hand was on his.

"Do you know me? Do you see me?" she said falteringly—her voice was broken with tears. "We were so afraid—we hurried so. I was so glad George was with me. We knew you must have sent for us both—and we could come together. We knew you would wish it."

He smiled at her. He was spared the last rebuff. He had not understood her, and he could not see beyond her face. Just beyond old Pierre, with his head by his master's knee, was George Benson. But De Montville did not know. With his eyes on Margaret's, he smiled with some new knowledge until he closed his eyes.

Suddenly he started up. The age had fallen from his face. He was young, ardent, adorable.

"Ah—it is thou," he said in his own tongue. "Thou comest? I have waited so—long."

. . . *She came toward him, as he knew she would, finding him so ill. She laid her tender pink palms on his forehead. She smiled into his eyes—knowing all. And, seeing the hunger that had lain always in his heart, she bent her head to his. Something holy, something healing, had gone out to him—without asking! And he knew that there was nothing more to seek.*

### EPILOGUE

There were few sounds about the old chateau; and those heard were the tranquil, reassuring utterances of growing, creeping and fluttering things. A bird chirped now and then; a breeze brought a full chorus from the tree

leaves in their first green; there was the song of running water, so constant that it seemed no sound.

No other dwelling was in sight. In front of the chateau, at the bottom of a slope of fine, close turf, lay the river. Under the windows of the right wing was a flower garden, as yet all in green, hidden from the road by a high box hedge. The road, in its turn, was quickly hidden from the house by its own windings. Beyond the high-pointed windows of the little Gothic chapel stretched a forest. Orchards, drifted over with white and pink, were back of the low tower of the medieval keep which was the heart of the chateau. And, whether villages or wildernesses were beyond, outside of the orchard scents and glimpses—just beyond the turn of the road—continuing the shadows of the park—not even the birds, circling high above the trees on early housekeeping errands, could tell.

It was a place to be glad in; or, joy failing, it was a chateau from which any man should be able to accept the brightening day with peace. The beauty all around was so young, so expectant, that it summoned any soul that might be behind the wide flung windows and open door to come and be young with it, and to expect. Yet for a long time the stillness was so unbroken by sounds of human life that, were it not that the trimness, the cleanliness everywhere spoke of preparation for a master's eye or the desire to please a mistress, the place might have seemed forsaken.

From a narrow window, high in the round tower of rough hewn gray stone, a woman was looking. She was so old, so brown, so wrinkled, so motionless, that she seemed at first a fancy of the builder held in the stone in which he worked. The sunlight caught a hidden gleam at the bottom of deep set peasant eyes. She leaned far out. She strained her eyes up and down the river, through the denseness of the forest shades, past the windings of the road, into the sweetness of the flowering orchards. A long time the woman hung there. There seemed nothing in

the world but forests, the chateau and her own waiting.

A blacker shadow was surrendered by the shadows of the forest. It was accompanied by the figures of men and of a girl who walked apart. With its coming the watcher started into life. She caught the heavy wooden shutters of the window from which she looked and pulled them together. After a time the shutters of another window

were closed—of another. At intervals that told of hurried steps between, the windows were closed to the air and the sunshine. Not one was forgotten; even at the top of the chapel clerestory, the dusky triangles of stained glass were pulled inward. Soon there was no breach through which the sun of the May morning could stream, none but the great door where stood the woman with folded hands—waiting.



## DAY AND NIGHT

By MADISON CAWEIN

**L**ONG swaths of summer, laid in hay sweet rows,  
Where through the fields a rambling pathway goes,  
Around a garden wall, where cedars dream,  
And roses shed their petals, one by one,  
A slumberous silver, leaps a little stream,  
Making a murmurous glimmer in the sun.  
Upon a log, a slender streak of gray  
Against the light, a small blue heron stands,  
Moveless as meditation. Scents of hay  
Swoon from the heavy hills and meadowlands.  
Sleep holds the day.

Dim heaps of clovered fragrance, cool with dew,  
And weedy fields a gateway leads into,  
Under the shadows of great chestnut trees  
Where moonlight waits, a presence, who awakes  
Cricket and katydid and wandering breeze,  
And shakes the perfume from the wild rose brakes.  
And now the darkness opens many an eye  
Of firefly gold, and clothes itself in white,  
Far following veils of mist; and, with a sigh,  
Voluptuous drawn, resigns her to delight.  
Love holds the night.



**I**T is a natural instinct to prefer a rent in your conscience to a patch on your clothes.

# "VIVE LE ROI!"

By HENRY CHRISTOPHER CHRISTIE

**I**T was the eve of the great coronation. All day long the vivid human stream had been flowing cityward, where within the space of a few hours it would mass itself into two undeviating walls, between which His Majesty would ride in splendid isolation, among his people but not of them.

It was a motley array. Prosperous country gentlemen bowled along in family carriages; sleek farmers and their fat fras rummled by in jolting carts, while laughing country wenches and sturdy clowns made good use of their legs.

The darkness increased, and yet the stream flowed on. All night long the gates of the city swung wide open to friend and foe alike, and the tumult increased. Roistering bands eddied around corners and melted away before brilliantly lighted cafés; strangers became friends at sight; the mob hurled itself hither and yon in a very debauch of joy.

Flung out of the seething human surge, like a bit of jetsam, a man staggered across the uneven pavement, and clutched at a smoking lamppost. Beneath the flickering yellow light his pallor was ghostly, and his puffed eyes and bloated cheeks gave him the look of a man long drowned. The only thing alive about him was the grip with which he clung to his support.

As he stood swaying, jolted this way and that, a heavy hand shot out of the darkness and crushed his slouched hat over his face. A voice hissed in his ear: "Drunk again!"

The man released the post and clung to his assailant.

"I'm all right," he whined, "and

on time." To this the other paid no heed.

"What fool gave you drink?" he inquired, in the same virulent whisper.

"I'm all safe," reiterated the drunkard, making an effort to straighten himself.

"Safe!" sneered his companion. "And the biggest work of the year yet to do! Yes—safe!" Then in a changed tone: "Here is Tunstat."

The newcomer joined the pair, nodding derisively at the inebriate.

"So, so," returned the other soothingly; "it makes no great matter. Breilly is always drunk. He is safe."

But the man addressed shrugged his shoulders contemptuously.

"Pah, Bruder, your baby will suck you to death yet. There is a limit. Hey there, Grinch!"

Thus addressed, a fourth shadow, that was sliding by in the blackness, paused and joined the trio who showed dimly in the hazy circle of light. Breilly still leaned heavily against his companion.

"Is all safe?" inquired Grinch. Here the drunkard came to life. "Safe!" he repeated scornfully. "Am I not here?"

The other anarchists laughed softly and shrugged their shoulders; but guarded as the laugh was, it drew a crowd, and someone offered them liquor.

"Drink to the King! A health to His Majesty! I don't grudge you a dram."

Bruder, who still supported his friend reached for the bottle.

"To His Majesty's long life!" he said with a sneer, and put the bottle to his lips. He drank and passed it to his friends.

"To His Majesty's long life! Long live the King."

Like a discordant echo, the populace caught up the refrain: "Long live the King!"

Bruder nudged his companion and pointed to his drunken friend. He stood alone, his right foot forward, his hand in his bosom, his shoulders squared, his head erect.

"Good God! Only see him!" he whispered.

"Long live the King! Long live the King!" came from out of the night.

"I thank you, gentlemen," said the inebriate, distinctly and emphatically.

"What the devil—" began Grinch in astonishment, but Bruder caught him by the hand.

"This is no place to be," he whispered. Then he seized Breilly firmly and drew him into the darkness.

The others followed and he led them some distance from the post to a grating that bridged the walk, over which he carelessly passed his heel. Immediately it opened, and downward, without hesitating, went the speaker, the other three following. They took a few steps in the dark; then a faint glimmer, which increased as they progressed, guided them to a dimly lighted cellar. At little tables sat a dozen or more men, who paused between cigar puffs to observe the new arrivals.

"Bruder," cried a burly man who was pouring liquor into a tall tumbler, "you are always on time."

Bruder sat down.

"Drink, friends," he invited, "to His Majesty—soon may he die! We never fail when he is with us." He jerked his head toward the semiconscious Breilly. "I'm as dry as a moldy biscuit," he went on and raised high his glass. "To the death of the King!" The liquor, gurgling down his throat, punctuated the sentence.

"What—more drink?" exclaimed Tunstat brutally, as Breilly straightened up for a moment and reached toward the flagon.

"Give it to him." It was Bruder who spoke. "I never deny him. It isn't safe."

"Sink you for a drunken beast!" cried Grinch, as he unwillingly tilted the tall stone jug over the inebriate's empty glass. "It's past midnight."

"So, so," said Bruder soothingly; "let him be."

"Drunk and near morning," grumbled Tunstat.

"So, so," soothed Bruder. "He's for luck."

"Luck!" muttered the first speaker.

"It's all right," returned the drunkard's companion. "I've known him for twenty years, and he is always the same—but he brings luck."

"True," said the man who had been silent; "we never go wrong while your infant pukes."

The object of their conversation again called feebly for drink.

"Look you," maintained his champion, "he's luck—he's charmed. When it's safe we take him along; when it's dangerous, we make him do the job."

"You remember the Leghorn *impasse?*" His auditor nodded. "Good! It was self-sacrifice—the nipple flash singed the hairs of the crowd, so to speak; he did the job and did not get a scratch. He was tossed about like a cork in the surf, but he got away without harm or suspicion. Then there was the bomb business in Antwerp. It was suicide; he did it, and only got a burn or two. Ah, he's luck, sure luck. He takes the difficult jobs, for he has a mania."

"A mania?"

"Yes, he is—" The speaker tapped his skull significantly.

"How?" asked the man curiously.

"He thinks he can't die—at least, not until he is a king."

"*Sacré!*"

"Sure. He hums on that tune drunk or sober; he runs all risks. When he is king then he will be careful, he says, very careful, but before—pouf!"—the speaker moved his hand airily—"he is charmed; he lives beyond death; he's enchanted."

The stranger eyed the sleeping form intently.

"It is a wonder he lives at all," he remarked at length with professional

gravity. He felt the pulse and stared into the face of his unconscious subject. "There is hardly any vitality in him—he is only galvanized."

"Tell him he dies," whispered the other.

"Wake up, man! You are dying!" As he spoke, Grinch stooped over the sprawling figure and shook it. "Your pulse is gone; you have only a few minutes to live!"

Breilly became rigid, and was slowly lifted to face the prophet. There was disdain in his spongy countenance.

"You are dying!" reiterated the doctor.

The half-conscious man eyed him angrily.

"Me?" he blundered at last into speech. "Me? I die—but not before I am a king—not before"; then he sank down again.

A student joined the group.

"Arouse you, my friend," he cried dramatically. "Arouse you, for dawn waiteth. Listen, my friend; ere twelve hours you die—you are gone—I weep."

The inebriate rose staggeringly to his feet.

"I cannot die; hear me—I cannot die," he shrieked. "Death itself is afraid. When I am king, then it will be different—but now—" He waved his arm defiantly and collapsed a second time.

The crowd choked with laughter.

Then a sudden draught lifted the smoke, and the student caught a clear view of the man's face for the first time.

"*Ach, Gott!*" he cried, trembling. His cigarette fell from his limp fingers and his face grew ashen. "*Ach, Gott,* it is—" But his voice was drowned by a roar of conflict that rolled in from the street. Someone cried:

"The gendarmes! The gendarmes! Remember the rendezvous!"

Bruder shook the inert mass on the floor.

"Escape!" cried another, plunging into the crowd and hustling the men apart. "Leave this drunken fool; we must protect ourselves."

The crowd surged around the motion-

less figure for a moment, then broke, as the rattle of swords and the tramp of armed men drew near, and disappeared.

"Flown, by God! We have missed them." The officer in command swore deeply in his chagrin.

"A fool's job," muttered a swarthy sergeant with a wound on his forehead, "and a nice mess for the morning papers."

"Ah!" The officer had stumbled over a bundle on the floor. "The lantern this way," he shouted. He half lifted the lifeless figure and threw the light on his face. "*Gott in Himmel!* What is this?" The bloody sergeant saluted. "Look here!" He pointed to the face against which the lantern glowed fiercely, while the officer swore great oaths under his breath. "A stretcher—quick, my men!"

"Where to?" asked the bearers.

"Where to?" repeated the officer. "To the palace."

The bearers moved away.

At the palace gates a perturbed official arrested their march. The officer's salute spelled failure.

"They have escaped?" questioned the Chamberlain angrily.

The officer saluted in silence.

"What have you there?"

"One of the number, drunk."

"Take him to the guard."

The Chamberlain turned with leaden feet to seek the King.

His Majesty was in the depths of a drunken debauch. At the first news that four anarchists had left for the capital with the express resolve of turning the festivities into funeral rites, he had taken to drink, and would listen to no hint of a public coronation until they had been captured. In vain the commander-in-chief hinted at revolution. The palace sat in sackcloth and ashes, but the King remained obdurate.

"I won't be made a target for pistol practice nor blown up by dynamite," said he.

The Chamberlain was a man of resource, but never had he been confronted by such a problem. He sent for the officer who had been in charge of the raid.

"You took but one prisoner?" he asked.

"But one, Your Excellency."

"Do you know him to be one of the four strangers?" The officer bowed. "Send him here." The officer hesitated, and the Chamberlain frowned. "Did you hear?" he asked angrily.

Again the officer saluted. "Well—" he began.

"Yes, yes; what troubles you?" The Chamberlain grew more impatient.

The soldier was visibly embarrassed. "He is very drunk, Your Excellency," he said at last.

"Bring him here," reiterated his chief.

Again the officer seemed embarrassed. "In fact, Your Excellency," he stammered, "the fact is—"

"Is what?" thundered the incensed dignitary. "Are you drunk, too, sir?"

The officer made a gesture of despair. "The fact is, Your Excellency, the prisoner—" He bent and whispered in the Chamberlain's ear. The Chamberlain looked his disbelief. "I repeat it," said the officer aloud. "See for yourself."

"So I will," replied the Chamberlain. "Conduct me to the cell."

When the Chamberlain reached the prison and gazed on the prisoner, his exclamation startled the sentry. The prisoner might have been the King's twin brother. When the minister visited the prisoner, he had hoped to induce him by promises or threats to tell something that might lead to the capture of his three accomplices, but the prisoner had recovered from the night's debauch, and confronted the officer with heroic silence.

"You must die if you do not speak," said the Chamberlain.

"Die!" The bleared eyes flashed a lurid fire; the crooked shoulders rose evenly; the bent chest swelled to bursting. "Die! I cannot die! When I am king—not before."

The official was too surprised to be amused. The prisoner's words suggested a strange plan. The more he thought of it, the more it took possession of his mind. On his way back

he was silent and preoccupied. When he reached the outer chambers of the palace, the roar of the multitude roused him to action. How could he excuse the King's absence? "The King is ill," meant a savage attack in the radical papers, who would insert "drunk" instead, and a rebellion might ensue that would sweep away the government. "The King refuses," would damage his political prospects beyond repair.

Then the Chamberlain's plan took such sudden root in his soul that all the details arranged themselves in an instant. He summoned the lieutenant and sergeant who had effected the capture, and gave them strict charge over His Majesty's apartments.

"On your life, let no one pass in or out. If His Majesty speaks, do not attend."

Then he sent for the prisoner.

"You do not fear death?" he asked him.

The man shook his head.

"Would you be king?"

His listener straightened as if he had received an electric shock. His head went up; his sleepy eyes widened; his chest heaved. "Yes," he said, "I must be king."

The Chamberlain gave hurried orders, and the prison guard began to divest the prisoner of his tatters.

As it neared noon, the crowd became dense and implacable about the palace roads. The police could not manage it. In the center of this turbulent mass stood the long processional line of state coaches. Flags of many nations drooped in the noonday heat; princes and diplomats waited for the signal to start.

Noon came, and yet no movement heralded the King; no equerry in jingle and glitter dashed from the palace. The silent and perplexed guards cursed inwardly, for they had been drawn up for two hours at the palace gate.

Meanwhile, a group of four men posted in the window of a tall building that faced directly the royal route swore at the tardy line.

"Are we to be balked?" said one. "The devil preserves him."

"Bah!" said another. "He is making himself a good target; he will be out presently."

The third—the one who had claimed the captured drunkard as his luck—was visibly depressed.

"Do you realize that we take great risks?" he said presently. "If Breilly blabs we are dead men."

"Bah!" cried the student. "Your Breilly dies; he is even now unconscious."

"You don't know him," muttered the other. "He is water in the night, but adamant in the day. If he blabs we are dead men."

"All will go wrong," he grumbled after an interval. "See, it is past noon by eight minutes, and yet the King lingers."

"Bah!" ejaculated the student, lighting another cigarette. "He'll come out, and I'll warrant to hit the very center of the Star of Ind. He'll drop at the flash."

At a quarter past noon the excited Chamberlain signaled to an aide: "Announce His Majesty." A flag ran up a tall pole. The very guns mouthed, "His Majesty." The troops saluted and the multitude sent up a deafening roar, "Long live the King!"

The ceremony was over. The venerable prelate, the only person near His Majesty, was too blind to notice any defect in the likeness, and the King himself behaved wonderfully well. He bowed at the right time; he betrayed no vulgar satisfaction and was not in the least overcome by his greatness. The weary and tortured Chamberlain at last breathed freely.

"Hurrah! Hurrah! Long live the King!"

The shouts of the populace lining the boulevards deafened the royal ears on his return to the palace, and bands of maidens deluged the royal coach with roses. The King enjoyed his triumph complacently; he smiled on his people; he bowed to the grandes and kissed his royal hands to the ladies.

Suddenly a pistol shot rang out above the noises of the highway. The King clutched at his heart and tumbled into a miserable heap, while women shrieked and great men dodged to cover. The long procession broke into sections and dissolved.

The Chamberlain was the only man who kept his head. Springing to the coach, he shouted: "Make way for His Majesty!" The coachman stood up and plied his whip.

The court physician met the coach. One glance at the limp figure within turned him as white as his ruffles.

"The King is dead!" he stammered through pale lips.

"You lie, fool!" thundered the Chamberlain. "The King lives. A litter for His Majesty."

"I told you so," said the man, as he slowly poured out a reeking drink. "Without Breilly we're hoodooed. I am done with the business."

The student flicked his cigarette ash contemptuously.

"It's strange," he added thoughtfully, "strange. I am sure I plugged his heart."

"Bah!" he went on in a passion. "It was a case of mail plate; your drunken mascot was as innocent of our failure as he was far from being king. I hate superstition!"



**“WILLET** has got the ability of working people reduced to a science."

"You mean an art, my boy."

"What's the difference?"

"A science teaches us to know; an art teaches us to do."

# IN EXILE

By REGINALD WRIGHT KAUFFMAN

**S**PRINGTIME again in Paris! Laughter and song and May  
From Neuilly Gate to Père La Chaise, Parnasse to Rue Riquet!  
Springtime again in Paris—and I am seas away!

The conquering sun comes marching beneath the Arc, and there,  
Sharp to the left, adown the Bois, go trotting pair and pair;  
The Tuileries Gardens glitter with ribbon gay *nourrices*,  
And sculptured Fénelon himself smiles up at St. Sulpice.  
The very pave is merry with all the hurrying feet;  
The Faubourg and the Quartier brush shoulders on the street,  
And down the boulevards again the table chatter swings,  
For it is spring in Paris, and the heart of Paris sings.

I know the lamps will sparkle soon through all the capital,  
Will light the ways of dark Montmartre, but most light Place Pigalle;  
And, oh, tonight I wonder: Is Pépé Fernan there,  
And Cecile and De Bronsky, Xerine and suave Albert?  
Does Concha Mendez sing tonight? Do Dircé and Clarice  
And Eulalie and Nanon Blanc whirl in the mad *matchiche*?  
Oh, Leonine and Fanchon, Julie, Celeste, Lizette,  
My heart is beating with you; my dreams are with you yet!

*Springtime again in Paris! Laughter and song and May*  
*From Neuilly Gate to Père La Chaise, Parnasse to Rue Riquet!*  
*Springtime again in Paris—and I am years away!*



"**S**O you were deeply touched by the poem young Mr. Softy wrote to you?"

"Yes."

"But it was not a good poem."

"I don't care. It was just as much trouble for him to write it as if he had been Shakespeare."



**I**T'S naughty to flirt unless you are in earnest, and then you can't.

# A LEOPARDESS AND HER SPOTS

By MABEL THAYER IACCACI

**A** QUARTER after seven had chimed, seven o'clock being the proverbial dinner hour of the wealthy and substantial residents of this dignified environ of the city.

In a solidly appointed drawing-room of a mansion standing aloof from the street, beyond a decorous lawn, was gathered a group of people, family connections, indisputably, from the garrulity of several and the silence of the rest.

The hostess, Miss Coleridge, when she heard the quarter-hour chime, looked a shade impatient. She glanced at the ten assembled guests, kept waiting, most irregularly, by the eleventh, the last and the least of the Family's matrimonial acquisitions.

The Family was always punctual, befitting its New England tradition. The dilatory guest, needless to say, was neither a Coleridge nor, immediately, a New Englander. What she was precisely had not been determined, even after these five years, by the group who awaited her coming and filled the waiting with desultory talk.

It was a Family dinner. The five women were in high-necked gowns. Their badly corseted figures and Puritan ideas made them feel more comfortable so. The five men in dinner jackets, revealing varying degrees of middle-aged rotundity, naturally were huddled together at one end of the big room, talking about—oh, what does it matter what they were talking about? One and all were American business men—and such are the "backbone of the country."

The sixth man, younger, taller, thinner, was quite evidently out of his ele-

ment. The others thought so in an uncomfortable way; he himself was sure of it as he listened politely to his hostess. This dinner was given for him. Poor young man, he had done nothing to deserve it, unless it were a just retribution for returning again to America after another ten years' absence in Europe. He was not even a prodigal. Had he been, there might have emerged some chance of gaiety and rejoicing, but there is nothing lightsome about the functions of the ninety and nine.

"Ah, is that Imogene?" said Miss Coleridge for the second time. The maid was drawing aside the portières, and waiting to announce dinner as the expected guest moved into the room, pausing beside Miss Coleridge with just a word, brief and courteous, of apology.

"Roger, this is Mrs. Winthrop Coleridge. Imogene, my cousin, Mr. Atterbury. Your arm, Roger; we will go in to dinner."

Miss Susan, very near-sighted and timid, took short steps and proceeded slowly, giving the young man ample time, as the others informally fell in behind them, to wonder if Mrs. Winthrop Coleridge would be placed next to him.

So it was arranged; yet when beside her he seemed in no haste to open the conversation with this lady who betrayed outwardly as little of the New England type and tradition as did he himself, though both had that Puritan ancestry from which they appeared to have revolted so aggressively.

As her sidelong glance fell on him, Roger smiled without breaking their pleasant common silence, a little oasis

of silence in that desert of chatter. Thereat she looked at him more fully and smiled back from her survey of the table, where those two were so marked off by their common dissimilarity from the prevailing character.

When five, Roger Atterbury had begun that deviation from the Coleridge likeness, solidly fleshed, largely featured, heavy-handed, that had crystallized into this nervous type, with its thin, finely modeled face and frame, its active, dark fingers and general air of breeding. What that aquiline profile denoted to Mrs. Coleridge recalled to her a vision of her earlier self before she had been ten years the wife of Winthrop, and to his relatives still the unknown quantity composed of that orphanhood, poverty, and French education environed in the Vienna musical circle in which Winthrop had first seen her.

Her ease in foreign tongues, her expensive elegancies, her arabesque beauty, had disconcerted the Family and weighed impalpably against her in these narrower confines of careful wealth and middle class respectability. She realized how their objective minds fretted at the quality of mystery and elusiveness about her, how her symbolic tastes, her household habits, even her very clothes, troubled their rigid conventions. At this moment these good women were trying too consciously to ignore her sweeping *décolleté*, the beauty of her pale arms, bare to the shoulder, one clasped by a gold serpent, coiled tightly, whose glittering, jeweled head pressed into the soft flesh above the elbow.

These were not her people and never could be. This dreary *métier*, how little it resembled that one of her remembrance, that world she had known as a girl, that society where she had fitted, as bright and ardent as the rest! Out of this unforgettable past had come like a pleasant shock, this man at her side, with the air of knowing things as she had known them, cognizant of the same sympathies and understandings, belonging to the same exquisite free-masonry of artistic intelligence.

Roger suddenly incarnated for her all she was deprived of, all she wearied for. She turned toward him with a quick, unusual motion. His eyes were on her still and still smiling. She gave him back a wide and troubled glance, reflecting her retrospection and *ennui*, the pain of a spirit chafing among antipathies he alone was capable of comprehending.

Into both minds the expectation came, quite simply, of knowing each other better. They would be drawn together, thrown together, on the meeting ground of their common understanding by precisely that which limited their intercourse with all these excellent people, prosperous, well meaning and God fearing as they were.

Mrs. Coleridge spoke presently. Her voice was quiet and had a pleasant hesitancy.

"I am sorry my husband is not here to join in welcoming you. He will return from New York at the end of the week. Will you dine with us then?"

"Indeed, yes. That is good of you." Roger spoke cordially. "I am glad to see as much of the family as they are willing to see of me." He had not felt so earlier in the evening. "My stay will be all too short at best."

"You return—"

"In three months, to Vienna."

"Vienna!" A light crossed Imogene's face. "Ah! I know it well; I love it. Much of my early life was spent there. It was so gay, so debonair."

She ceased suddenly, and the man, who felt her to be of those women unaccustomed to speak of themselves, divined the compelling something, superior to habit, which had found utterance in her few words.

The women about him were chatting personalities incident to the sex and to family dinners. As he glanced gently away from Imogene, two caught his eye and simultaneously lifted their voices.

The table looked his way. Soon he became a center around which hummed interrogations, opinions, self-important advice. Inspired by a first courage-

ous example, everyone began to clothe him piecemeal with Coleridge consequence and to deal out the special privileges of their curiosity and suggestion.

Roger, never having resolved his energies into so many thousands per annum nor regularly attended church nor married and raised a family, had not been accounted a success according to these three Coleridge standards. Also on his former visit to America from his post as second secretary of legation, he had regarded flippantly things held impressive in the Family. This had seemed the unfortunate and to-be-expected result of irregular Continental life.

On this, his second visit, he was suspected of irony. Irony was not well understood by the Coleridges, who regarded it as a characteristic of those who had not succeeded in life—a futile weapon of failure.

Though Roger had not been successful—how could one be as a secretary of legation on very little salary?—still, he had not been acknowledged a total failure—as yet. It seemed as if this visit might have for the family some such subterranean significance, as that of pronouncing on Roger.

Imogene was the first to leave after dinner. One felt she was always the first to leave such functions. Roger saw her to her carriage and they paused at its door. The night was of late winter and mild. Rivulets of melting snow ran in the street; a gentleness as of spring warmed the air; the sky leaned near in deep blue friendliness.

"You won't forget to ask me to dine?" said Roger, wanting to hold a moment longer this woman's mellow, friendly gaze. She moved her head slightly. All her infrequent gestures were feminine, slow, full of elegance.

"No," she answered, keeping her eyes on him, "for I want you to come." And after a pause: "I want you to know Winthrop."

Roger had not the slightest desire to know Winthrop, the only one of the brothers he never had met, but with

these words of Winthrop's wife a wish suddenly arose to know what manner of man he might be.

So Roger and Winthrop met, sitting opposite at a table, appointed with distinction, very different in significant details from the other Coleridge dinner tables.

Winthrop was clean cut and vigorous. "He has touched forty," thought Roger; then his eyes passed to Mrs. Coleridge. She was not in her first youth, yet with an untouched, unwarmed air, not virginal precisely, yet not the married look, slight but indelible, to which Roger was accustomed as the general expression of all mated women.

His conjectures returned to the husband. Could there be fire, imagination, dreams, within that concrete, good-looking, fatuous-mannered man?

Winthrop Coleridge reckoned himself as having, alone of his family, the cosmopolitan touch. It was proved by his frequent European trips, his love of French opera, and his having married Imogene. Also—and inconsiderately against the Family belief in prohibition—he served wine at dinner—only one wine, to be sure, which stood firm from soup to finger bowls.

He raised his glass now, looking amiably at his guest.

"A pleasant stay among us!" he said. "And by the bye, why don't you come home oftener? After all, you are one of us, even if you don't like New England."

If he did not sympathize with Roger's point of view, whatever it might be at any moment, he attached instability to points of view; at least, he felt competent to understand this wanderer from the fold better than the rest of them. Living with Imogene had taught him a thing or two about life and people.

He failed to surmise that to Imogene his relatives' ignorance seemed less deplorable than his own beginnings of knowledge.

"Oh, well, when you're middle-aged," he went on, setting down his glass, "you'll be coming back here fast

enough. I tell you what it is; age acts on you like loosing a carrier pigeon. You set flight for home. A lot of plain things, like the old place and childhood friends and all that, just take hold of you. You want to come and live among them a few years before you die."

Robert touched his pointed black beard and glanced at Roger's smooth shaven face. It seemed to epitomize the difference between them. Shaving might well symbolize the oncoming of age and a permanent return to the scenes of one's forefathers.

Roger smiled, feeling a desire to humor his host.

"Do you believe the homing spirit attacks other instincts besides the one of merely setting ourselves down physically among our old associations?"

Winthrop hesitated. This was less objective. He wanted to look out for hidden meanings before committing himself.

It was Imogene who answered.

"You mean, does inheritance of certain moralities and ideals return strongly at a certain age, no matter if we have drifted far in the meantime?"

"Yes, I mean precisely that. I believe it may be so. Inherited traditions, the accumulated training of a certain kind of ancestry, subtly passed on to us, whether we are conscious of it or not in our youth, will act for us in our age. It will stand by us, if it is a moral inheritance, in lieu of the moral strength we may not have acquired. Often what we think our own courage or integrity is only the momentum of our inheritance. It is greater than environment. It is greater in age than in youth. It is greater in women than in men."

Imogene smiled faintly.

"Then a leopardess cannot change her spots, even if she changes climate and conditions? In the jungle or the cage the spots remain, an inheritance from generations of ancestors, beyond altering?"

"Yes," said Roger, "within limits; and why not? It should be rather a

comfortable thing for a woman to feel now and then that she can rest securely on her grandmother's handed down virtues, and not have to worry around picking up new ones to fit the sliding scale of our present century."

"Oh, if you are going to theorize," interrupted Winthrop, "I am out of it. Imogene, I suppose Mr. Atterbury's being here is reminding you of Vienna?"

His wife shrank a little and looked up. Vienna—and the hope of returning. Was it not always in the background of her thoughts? Winthrop's remarks were not always so unlucky, but he talked on heavily, unnoticed.

"You would never know, Atterbury, that my wife had New England parents, the stiffest kind, too, even if she was born and brought up on the other side. But there doesn't seem a bit of old New England in her. She pines for Europe, though she's been over here ten years now."

What was the matter with Winthrop? Imogene turned her eyes away from him and a slow flame wandered up her cheeks. These odious personalities, how she disliked them! Never quick to speak, she only breathed deeper in her silence. Roger glanced but once at her and then broke in on Winthrop.

"It is ten years since I was over, but I find few changes. Out here everything seems precisely the same with all of you—your homes and lives! It gives one a sense of solidarity."

"Oh, yes," said Winthrop fatuously, "we are a close crowd around here. Don't let in any newcomers, don't alter our houses, our morals nor our manners, and don't change our servants. No fires, no failures, no divorces, no scandals and but few deaths."

"Happy that community that has no history," said Mrs. Coleridge, recovering her voice, and rising, she left the two men to their cigars.

The Coleridges saw little of Winthrop's wife. Her first politely assumed interest in their dull routine dropped away by degrees, and she withdrew more and more into an exis-

tence of her own, pathetically lonely, had anyone cared to penetrate her reserve to discover. She had no children, but it was vaguely supposed she had "interests" as well as devotion to reading—chiefly foreign literature. It was known she rode a great deal; too much, the women of the Family thought, accustomed to horses only as animals to pull their comfortable carriages. So much spirited riding and such tight fitting habits on a figure almost too noticeably elegant were not favorably regarded.

Roger was alive to the erectness and elegance of her shape as he rode with her—once or twice in the first week and after that daily.

When he took counsel with himself he soon perceived he was alive to many more things about her to which the others were blind—her beauty, her mystery, her silent appeal and the banality and pity of her misplaced relation to life. It all came down heavily on his soul and senses.

"How does she endure it?" he cried out one evening after he had left her. "Is there no way of escape? Why doesn't that ass of a husband get his eyes open? It would stifle me to live here even a year. And these are my people; I have kinship with them; I was born and reared here. But to her it all means nothing. She need not try to be tolerant. What made her marry Winthrop? By heaven, I don't know! A home, perhaps; a man to protect her, poor thing! I think she just let herself be married. The world's against women like that, the silent, passive kind. If they have no money they are bound to go the wall, either in or out of marriage."

Whereby it will be seen that Roger had ideas about the sex not entertained by the Family. The Coleridge ladies contended earnestly and with confused repetition, as became ladylike and untrained brains, that women should marry for love alone, any other marriage being shocking and unsanctified. They said of course Imogene loved Winthrop, but her foreign education made her show it differently.

What the Coleridge men thought will never be known.

Some weeks later Miss Coleridge held Roger's hand in a friendly grasp.

"Well, Roger," she said, "we are all sorry to have you leave. We have just begun really to know you, and now off you go. None of us has ever been abroad but once, you know, except Winthrop, and he says he will never go again. We are all too settled in our ways to like the disturbance of travel, and so we don't know when we shall see you again. I hate to have you go, Roger; I shall miss you sorely."

"Thank you, dear cousin," said the young man cordially, pressing Miss Susan's fingers. She had seemed the most alive, the most composite of them all, and his spirit had warmed to her flickers of humor and good feeling.

He was here to bid her good-bye, for he was to sail the next morning from New York. Miss Susan peered up at him as he rose.

"We have tried to feed you well, Roger, and take good care of you, but you look a good deal paler and thinner than when you came, and you were never robust at the best."

In truth, it was as she said. There were nights when he looked haggard and white as he stared in his dressing glass, nights when— It was just as well that he was going back to Vienna and to his duties. He bent and kissed his kindly old relative's hand, wishing for that instant he were again the little red-cheeked boy to whom she used to give those red-cheeked apples.

Miss Coleridge watched down the path the straight, distinguished figure, the easy movement, with an unacknowledged acquiescence in his difference from them all. He did not think their thoughts nor lead their lives; yet he had found something and used it which had eluded the others, something that made him content on little a year, made him winning and lovable, brought to him uncatalogued but desirable things.

Roger walked rapidly up the broad and shady street, yielding itself to the oncoming heat of noon. The Cole-

ridges, all but Miss Susan and Mrs. Winthrop, whom he was on his way to see, had left for their country homes. It was June, and quite time.

Mrs. Coleridge was at home, the maid said, and opened the door of the cool and darkened drawing-room. Roger was startled at his nervousness. He had come simply to say good-bye and get it over quickly. He knew what it was costing him, and he meant never to return to America. It was something to be grateful for, that Winthrop would never come again to Europe nor Imogene without him; he would not let her.

She entered the room on his last troubled thought. Roger moistened his lips and went to meet her. She had such a singular look in the dim light. Her eyes were fixed on his with bright intentness, but she said nothing as she held out her hand.

"I have come, you know, to bid you good-bye—you and your husband."

The poor fellow spoke hurriedly, and she replied, looking away from him:

"Winthrop has gone to the shore over Sunday."

Roger let go her hand and turned to the window. He could think of nothing to say. She had known he was leaving, known the day, the train, the steamer. He had told it quietly enough on their last ride. She had looked straight ahead, then cantered on in front where he could not see her face. Both had realized for days past that the time was nearing for his departure, and both had refrained from talking about it.

Her silence now was dreadful to the young man. If she would only speak it might give him back his courage. Was she suffering? Could she be suffering as he was? He took her by the arm almost roughly. Her eyes turned up to his, wide and fixed, with the veins blue beneath them. She was silent because she had not strength to speak. He saw that and bent over her.

"Imogene, I love you. God forgive me, dear, but will you go back with me to Vienna?"

The strange thought had at last shaped itself. His whisper reached her ear and the breath laden with this agony of separation seemed to go out of her. Roger caught her other arm and held her rigidly; then he felt her sinking and drew her to him, straining her to his breast. Mute, motionless, they stood as one figure, like some strange effigy of suffering carved in stone, stained with the colors of life.

Imogene, seated in her chair at one end of the parlor car, leaned on the window sill and gazed out on a new world, painted with unwonted hues. Its color and form had been so long unfamiliar, held only as a delicate, happy memory, a memory of her girlhood. Her face was suffused with a light as of one entered into a great inheritance, of one dead come to life. Her eyes held a moisture that gave them an extraordinary, melting glance. Now and then she turned them, all unseeing, on some passerby and he who looked, looked again. Some sighed for themselves because they had never known this illumination and some, knowing, sighed for her.

She was not thinking yet, only feeling, feeling with the starved emotions of years. There had been a few moments in her room when the sum of her hidden nausea and hatred of her destiny, her home, her married life, had spun her round and round. She had destroyed things then, within reach of her hands, instinctively, to save herself from something worse.

Once outside that mournful house it had all fallen away. Only one knowledge, one fact, remained. To that she moved calmly now with preoccupied gaze.

The weeks which had followed her first meeting with Roger she had taken as they came, making no effort toward nor away from him and their opportunities. A silent, chiefly passive creature, a fatalist, yet with the heart newly awakened to a morality of its own, she drifted in the stream of circumstance. At the final moment all might have passed differently, and she

would have made no sign, but gone on her somnambulist's way, hugging her vision, seeking only more hours of solitude to live with it. Would it have made it more terrible or more easy to support life, to see and hear her husband day and night with that vision, ardent and compelling, in her bosom, the image of the instinctive master of her heart?

Imogene, as these thoughts flamed in on her sensations, put her hand before her face.

She recalled their last moments together and Roger's final words. He had seized her hands, covering them with kisses and tears, muttering: "God forgive me! God forgive me!" Then he had held her from him, staring at her with excited eyes.

"You will come—you will surely come, Imogene? You won't lose courage at the last moment, dear, and not come? You won't throw me over? My God, if you do—if you let me sail without you—I'll never trouble you again, never a sound or sight of me! It will be the end of it for me—for us both. It will be final."

He had hurried away blindly. Yet could he not feel that with him there went all of her that was truly herself, the delicate, unquestioning soul and heart of her? It went with him then; it would follow him always—the mist and fire of her love; it would abide with him forever, wherever he might be, near or far from her. Only this passive envelope of her spirit, already and always at his side, followed on now like a meek automaton to their remeeting in New York. Roger was to be at the train awaiting her. The steamer sailed at six the next morning.

A trembling fled over Imogene, and again that strange, warm suffusion melted her, that feeling of being caught up into another ether, onto solitary and wonderful heights. The effulgence of her look faded slowly; closing her eyes, she seemed still to tread those spaces, but suddenly not with the flaming creature, the man Roger, at her side, but only his shadowy counterpart, mute and faithful as shadows are.

Imogene pulled down her veil as the train drew into New London. Two people, a woman and a man, entered the car and took the chairs nearest her. Something about them, unobtrusive and quietly dressed as they were, with no claim to undue attention, yet held Imogene's regard.

They looked at each other constantly, covertly, speaking very low. The man, catching Imogene's gaze, checked himself consciously, and following his glance, his companion turned, questioning her with a troubled eye. She was a delicate, pale woman, quite evidently gently born and bred. On entering the car she had cast a hasty glance about. From time to time she looked flutteringly at the people who passed; then, with her hand shielding her eyes, she would devour her companion's countenance.

Both made futile attempts to read, to look out of the window. A secret power drew their eyes back to one another, sent their hands reaching toward each other, their hearts beating with vague alarms, and invested them with an air unlike the other human beings about them.

Imogene divined their pitiful secret. This pale, feverish woman was running away with her lover.

Imogene herself was running away—to her lover.

What she had not projected as her own action, her own future, she began to put together piecemeal as theirs. Her mind, against her will and heart, worked back and forth, back and forth, weaving, weaving the scenes of their life to come, the slow and dreadful descent from the heights. She herself was thrust aside at last, pushed over into the realm of nightmares, of things unborn and unburied. There closed over her inner vision strange understandings, ascetic impulses of her unknown forefathers, the knowledge of forgotten martyrdoms. Rising ardors, which palsied the emotions that the soul might be released, the far-away inheritance of past moralities and ideals, circulated within her. In cloud and flame they enveloped her till all

material things were blotted out under this terrible exorcising of the heart and senses. She beheld herself immolated on a stupendous altar, constructed by generations of unalterable beliefs and sacrifices, and she, the least in the long chain of spiritual circumstance, bound as firmly as the greatest martyr among them all. With a sound as of trumpets and the clanging of great gates upon the outer darkness, her Puritan ancestry had arisen and summoned her within the temple.

It was a poor, distracted creature who rose and left the train at New Haven at five o'clock. A half-hour later the same figure, not unlike a blind woman, stumbled into a train going in the reverse direction, and arriving at the terminal of her accustomed city, took a cab and was driven away.

The long drive through the familiar, unattractive streets, widening as they unrolled into the substantial environ, gave to the huddled woman's figure in the carriage only an outward calm.

It was but half past ten when she reached her house. The façade, its dark lines bitten by faint specks of light in the servants' windows, stretched

firm and angular before her. She cast upon it a queer and haunting look as she pressed the bell. The maid, opening the door, heard her say: "I changed my mind about remaining over night; take this bag to my room," and saw her move slowly upstairs.

At dawn she was still sitting motionless at her window, her hands in her lap. Later, as the sounds of the day's beginning filtered through the air, a messenger boy came scurrying up the street. He turned in at the gate, caught sight of the figure in the window and waited at the door without ringing. She went down and took the envelope from him. It was addressed to her and she returned to her room to open it.

It read:

Winthrop critically injured in auto accident at Nahant. Come at once.

GEORGE COLERIDGE.

Imogene put the paper down as the hour struck. It was six o'clock! She looked for a long time at the hands of the clock; then, adjusting her hat and veil and taking up her bag, untouched from its first packing, she went out.



## THE MASTER

By ALOYSIUS COLL

MANY a deed of fame began  
A dream,  
And sorrow maketh many a man  
Supreme.  
Wit counts her victories more than toil  
Can win,  
Beauty more victims than the spoil  
Of sin;  
But Love, the least and last to call,  
Has made  
The greatest giant of them all  
Afraid!

# THE MAN WHO STAYED

By CHARLES FRANCIS READ

"**Y**ES, sir, and the parrots was that thick you had to brush 'em away like you would a lot of bugs."

Keester's boy looked up with solemn eyes and puckered lips to the wind-reddened face above him, into the mouth of which huge bites of crackers and cheese disappeared now and again by way of lending timely emphasis or proper suspense to the narrative.

"Knowin' the lay of the land better'n the rest of 'em, I was leadin' the way myself," the man continued, "when all at once I hears the most awful yell behind me. I turns round—and what you 'spose I saw?" The narrator stopped abruptly and artlessly turned himself about upon the counter. With a grave preoccupation befitting the suspended climax, he reached over and picked up a can of sardines from a convenient stack upon the shelf behind him.

The light of adventure shone in the boy's eyes, but a quick frown came between them as he observed the inadvertency. It was very hard, with that frenzied cry still ringing in his ears, to call the attention of a real adventurer to so small a matter, but his father had intrusted the store to his charge while he stepped out, and he had already violated his trust so far as to give the man a very generous lunch of crackers and cheese. "Please don't," he stammered; "they're French."

The man looked hurt, looked as if he might forget to go on with his story. For a moment the boy hesitated, but the cry was swelling mightily now, and in another instant he was behind the counter. "Here, take this," he urged

hurriedly, thrusting another tin into the man's hand. They're every bit as good, only the domestics don't cost as much, and with a deep sigh of delightful retrospect, not untinged with dread of the possible effect of the humdrum interruption, he planted himself again before the dangling feet of the hungry stranger who had drifted into the store late on a rainy afternoon to tell fascinating tales of strange countries.

The man on the counter eyed the label gravely but without resentment, and then as he deftly opened the can with a big jackknife, he picked up his story. "And what you think I saw?" he repeated with thick gusto arising from the rapid disappearance of two of the domestics. "There was Jimmy Dean, as fine a young fellow as you ever seen, a-danglin' six foot up in the air with half a boay constrictor wrapped round him and the rest of it a-reachin' up into the tree where the animal had been watchin' us from when we went under him."

Keester's boy—he really knew better, but he was a little boy and it was growing shadowy in the store—glanced about him involuntarily, but looked up quickly, in time to note the finish of another little fish. What experiences a man must have to go through with to be able to take things so easily!

"Poor Jimmy Dean," the man sighed thickly, as he lightly brushed a reminiscent hand across his mouth. "Course I stepped up and shot the animal right off, but that didn't do Jimmy no good. He was just a pulp by that time. Just a slimy, mushy pulp," the speaker amplified with artistic satisfaction as he carefully adjusted a sardine between

two crackers. "Well, I must be goin'," he added quite suddenly and irrelevantly, as he crowded the crackers into his mouth and the can into a pocket. "See you later, sonny," and he was at the door as Keester entered with another man.

"Hello, Sam!" the man with Keester greeted him as they passed. "What you doing here?"

"Oh, just lookin' round a bit," he drawled as he brushed on out.

"Don't know Sam, do you?" the man with Keester went on, settling himself comfortably upon a nailkeg as the storekeeper began to light his lamps. "He's the darndest, laziest liar ever struck this town. I ain't seen him around here for some years now; guess he works some on the boats running between Chicago an' Duluth, but to hear him talk, you'd think he'd been most everywhere. Queer devil, always hungry and generally eatin' something or other. Why, hel-lo, Jerry!" he interrupted himself to exclaim, as he suddenly became aware of Jerry's small form behind the counter. "Couldn't see you till just now. Been feedin' Sam an' hearin' the lion roar? Or was it snakes this time? Sam's seen enough snakes to write a book, that's sure," and he winked openly at Keester and laughed a dry laugh, a laugh so dry, in fact, that it seemed to be all broken up into dusty little sharp-cornered fragments.

Keester's boy was only a small boy, and he did not understand all that the man said, but in some way the dry chuckle and the heartless words hurt. They made him sorry for the man who had endured so much and painted it all so vividly—and in a way he did not understand, they made him sorry for himself. He turned uncertainly to his father. His father rarely made fun of him, but he was smiling now. The boy's face grew very red and his chin quivered. "I don't care. I'm going to see things for myself some day," he burst out defiantly, "and then I'll come back and tell you about it, and you'll have to believe *me!*"

When he was twelve Jerry decided to

go with the circus. It was not, however, the blare and glare and odor of tan-bark that attracted him, though he enjoyed all this as any normal boy must. It was the animal tent, with its queer smells and sounds, its wide, staring eyes and its little, twinkling, wicked eyes hidden under masses of fur or flesh, its stripes and spots, its cruel claws and padded feet; it was the queer folk of all the wide world that laid its spell upon the boy until his small body fairly shivered with the power of it. As he looked up into the camel's sneering, unfathomable eyes, he felt the roll of the great body under him and the impact of the cushioned feet on the hot desert sands—miles still to go under a blistering sun, and not a drop of moisture left in the waterskins! The great white bear, as he looked at it, grew smaller and smaller before his eyes until he could scarcely make out the ungainly bulk resting upon its haunches far out on the floe through which his good ship cautiously made her way. The kangaroo he saw, not as it lay in its cage in prone dejection, but frisking buoyantly over its native heath in leaps and bounds of a hundred feet or more, with its young peering out over the edge of their safe retreat like the occupants of the car of some balloon.

But he was a good boy, and before he spoke to the animal keeper about going with him, he consulted his father and mother. It surprised him to find them unwilling, and even his father's going with him again to the evening performance could not quite dull the sharp edge of his disappointment. The store looked very grim and prosaic when he came down the next morning to help his father while the clerk was out. Only the Italian olives and French sardines gave him friendly welcome. There were some bananas, too, freshly arrived—but not a tarantula anywhere about them.

When Jerry finished school at sixteen, not a few of those who crowded the church at commencement exercises predicted that the boy who spoke so earnestly upon "Farthest North," would some day go far himself. "Seen

Sam lately, Jerry?" the man with the dry laugh chuckled when the exercises were over and they were crowding about the little group of flushed and happy graduates. It was an old joke of his by this time, and the boy having grown up with it, as it were, smiled easily. This was his night, and no laugh, not even one broken up into sharp-cornered, ironical fragments, had power to disturb his newfound equanimity.

"You wait a little while," he retorted confidently. "I'll get my information at first hand before long—and then I'll come back and stir you up a bit."

Keester's boy by this time was pretty generally known as a smart one, and so, though Bristol people felt that their school was really plenty good enough for anybody, they were not surprised when Jerry, after working in the store all summer, was sent away in the fall to an Eastern preparatory school. His father could afford it, though the well-to-do German farmers who traded with him grunted and shook their heads in slow amusement at such a queer idea. He was a good man, the boy's father, a slow, quiet man, with weary eyes and a radiant smile—a man who dug away persistently, month in and month out, at sugar and salt, nails, screws and bolts, butter and eggs, tinware, binding twine and flour—and did it all, not wholly for fifteen per cent of the yearly turnover, but in part, at least, out of an instinct for honest service left to him by a long line of German ancestors, who had learned through centuries to do small things well. He and the boy talked little while they worked about the store together, and they had little more to say to each other when they were at home, but always there existed between them a clear understanding, a mutual acceptance of the commonplace and its duties.

Between Jerry and his mother, however, the bond was a subtler one. Out of an overwhelming desire to see her only child grow up into a good man, she had possessed herself of his inner life from his earliest boyhood. His life lay always open for her reading, and with-

out thought of possible indelicacy, she scanned its pages day by day fearfully, questioningly. When now and then a boyish error crept into the record, the boy spent his hard half-hours with the terror-stricken mother—most often manfully acknowledging the wrong, if wrong there was, reasoning always as best he could with her, promising, reassuring. And from these ordeals the mother would come out cheered and strengthened, the boy relieved and loyally thankful, but exhausted and depressed.

These times were rare, however, compared with the hours he spent beside her upon the long couch talking about many things but mostly about himself. She did not make him feel young then, but, instead, grew young herself and laughed so easily—the way a girl laughs—throwing herself into his life, his thought and his plans with an abandon he slowly came to realize dimly could not be but for those other times in the closet—and for them both he loved her.

One topic, however, gradually became tabooed between them. From his grandmother—his mother's mother, at that—the boy acquired a marvelous zest for tales of foreign countries. Half the day this quiet, placid old lady, who had never left her native State, sat poring over books of world wide travel; and as the mother watched this same fascination growing more and more upon the boy, she strove with all her might, and even prayed to enter into it with him. But an uncanny presentiment of danger chilled her interest beyond power of control, and with a silent understanding the subject was finally dropped from the talks upon the couch. Just why he should catch his mother eying him so tragically when he happened to look up at her from a volume of jungle hunting or Arctic exploration was past Jerry's ken. But as there were no questionings in private, no doubts or fears openly expressed, he ceased, boy fashion, to trouble himself about the matter, secure in the knowledge that at least she considered it no wrong.

Jerry spent his preparatory year in the East, but the next fall he entered the university in the city only an hour's ride away. The preceding year had been too hard upon the mother left behind; he could spend his Saturdays and Sundays at home now, and they were both well content with this. He proved to be a good student, and a few days before his graduation it was announced that he had won the fellowship in geology—a traveling one at that. How slowly the train crept along home that evening! Examinations had kept him in the city steadily for several weeks now, and suddenly it seemed a year. It was after store time when he reached the house, and his father was sitting on the couch beside his mother. They were not expecting him, and he noted with a shock how deep the lines were in his father's face, and how gray his mother had grown.

"Why, what's the matter?" he asked as they hurriedly rose to meet him, and then, without waiting for a reply—for he was only twenty-one—and with an arm about his mother, he told them the news of his great good fortune. How proud they were of him then! How his mother alternately hugged him to her and held him off from her so that she could have a good look at him with shining, streaming eyes! And his father's drawn face lighted up as he said quietly, "That's fine, son," and gently laid a hand on his shoulder.

Then they all sat down again while he explained at length exactly what it meant to him—six glorious, sweltering months on the borders of the Nefud Desert not far from Suez, in a spot where many strange animals had been fit to lie down and die a million years ago or more; after that, a few months' work in some German university, and finally, six months north of the Himalayas, about the sources of the Brahmaputra, where there are still too many dotted lines upon the map. All this—and expenses paid!

He began enthusiastically and ended up bravely, uninterrupted by question or comment from father or mother. "Why—what is it?" he stammered

again, waiting with a horrid sinking for an answer that was slow to come. Suddenly his father put a shaking hand to his forehead and his mother raised her eyes to his, eyes that looked out at him all at once in stark terror. "Mother—mother!" he cried out sharply, springing to the couch beside her and drawing her close to him.

"Oh, Jerry—Jerry! We thought we wouldn't tell you about it just yet," she sobbed against his coat. "I'm going blind—blind!"

Days later, it seemed to him, when the poor, frightened soul, momentarily reassured, had fallen asleep at last, the boy went out into the night. He ached all over, heart and head, mind and body. He had gone up into a high place, and suddenly had fallen into lower depths than he had ever imagined could exist. He took off his hat and looked upward—as it is written in the fiber of man he shall when it grows dark about him—and a snatch of Stevenson's "Requiem" flashed through his sick brain:

Under the wide and starry sky,  
Dig my grave and let me lie.

How his mother loved to pore over Stevenson's letters! And now—The pity of it tore his heart afresh. And tonight, under this same wide and starry sky, he must dig the grave of his newborn hope.

The doctors had told her it would come on slowly—a gradual degeneration of the optic nerve. There was nothing whatever to do for it, but this made no difference; he could not leave her now. After a while, perhaps, when time had made merciful adjustment, he would be able to get away and see things for himself. Meanwhile, at the university they would probably give the scholarship to Cameron. And the new instructorship the head of the department had hinted at—what would they do with that—give it to Cameron, too?

No! His whole hot youth rose in sudden wild rebellion. It was too great a renunciation, one he had no right to make. It would do his mother more harm than good to know that he

was eating his heart out while he stayed at home with her. There can never be gain in cruelly disproportionate sacrifice. Cairo, Bombay, Calcutta, Singapore and Tokio—the names he had learned to love at his grandmother's knee—whirled through his tired brain in weird, barbaric measures until he reeled on the dusty road, forgetting he had eaten nothing since noon. Mountain and valley, forest and plain, with all their wild folk, beckoned and called to him—and then, again, that awful sinking as the thought of his mother swept over him. Poor, sobbing little child with gray hair and frightened eyes!

In the morning he went downtown with his father instead of going back to the city. His father stooped perceptibly more than when they had walked together last, and he had neglected to shave for some days. Just before they reached the store Jerry broke the silence. "You are looking pretty tired, father," he said. "I guess I'll stay around here for a little while, until we find out how mother's going to get along. Maybe I'll get another chance to go a little later on."

Keester did not turn his head. "All right, Jerry," he assented slowly, gripping the boy's arm so hard that he winced.

So it was Cameron who went to the Nefud Desert and after that to the plateau of Thibet, with an interval of study in Germany. Two years later Jerry received a copy of his monograph, but never opened it. Later on Cameron was made a fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, and at thirty-five became an assistant professor.

Meanwhile, Jerry worked faithfully in the store as the light in his mother's eyes slowly failed, until it flickered out at last into total darkness. Very gradually the stolid, well-to-do German farmers came to look upon him as an equal in hard-headed common sense. Keester's boy was all right; an education hadn't hurt him any, after all. A white-haired old chap, with a clean shaven face and droll, rheumy eyes, still sat in the circle behind the stove

at night. Occasionally he chuckled in wizened fashion at his own wit, and Jerry, if about, would laugh with him, for time had brought the two into an odd sympathy. "There's a great man a-spoilin' in that boy," the old man was fond of observing, as Jerry passed the group of cronies on his way to the front of the store under the weight of a big sack of flour or rolling before him a barrel of salt. "And I ain't so sure," he sometimes added meditatively, "but what there might be a lot bigger one a makin'!"

At forty Jerry was drawn quite innocently into politics, and to his great surprise found his influence sufficient to turn the balance in a district that had been considered worse than doubtful by a man who feared his seat in Congress might be occupied by another that winter. Some months after this—long after Jerry had dismissed politics from his mind with a sigh of relief—he received a letter from Washington. He opened it in the store as he stood beside his father at the desk. His man had been made a member of the Committee on Foreign Relations, and the paper bore the committee's imprint. He flushed as he glanced it over, then frowned and threw it down upon the desk; then he picked it up and read it over once more, and finally handed it over to his father without comment.

His father read it deliberately, folded it painstakingly and returned it to the envelope. "Where is Fuchau?" he asked slowly.

"Somewhere in China, I guess," Jerry returned absently, and with that turned away abruptly and walked out through the back of the store. "God help him," his father muttered to himself as he opened his ledger; "I can't."

"The consulate at Fuchau—I can arrange it—worth three or four thousand a year—great place to see Oriental life—" disjointed phrases from the letter repeated themselves over and over in Jerry's brain with telegraphic conciseness, as he came out upon the quiet side street. The cool, bright April sun shone uncompromisingly upon

the white road as it wandered up the hill, upon the bare limbs of the elms and maples, and upon the straight, neat, deadly commonplace houses back of them. The doctor across the way, standing upon the porch of his little office, waved a friendly greeting.

He walked up the hill, on past the water tank perched in perilous rotundity upon its slender girders, and so out into the country. He knew that foreign consulates do not often seek the man, and he was filled with a bitter resentment that fate should take this opportunity to bait him. There was no temptation—he could not go, and that was all there was to it—but the old wound had been reopened, and he shrank under the lash of the pain of it. Cairo, Bombay, Calcutta, Singapore and Tokio—ah, the sweet foolishness of the old refrain! Would he never forget it?

When he came back to the store again his father was helping a small girl to spend a penny to the best advantage. When she had finally made up her mind, and he had carefully opened the door for her, he turned to Jerry. "Well, son?" he asked, as he walked back and stood awkwardly beside him.

Jerry smiled faintly. "Don't say anything to mother about it," he cautioned. "It might worry her. I can't go just yet—maybe a little later on—"

Now and then he went into the city, but never farther than this, nor for more than a day at a time—and he did not marry. As his father became less active in the business he found less time to read, but never less for his mother. The long talks upon the couch grew longer with the years, and the mother still threw herself into his life and thought—there were no plans now—with the same abandon, and her laugh grew no less young. Time had made for her its merciful adjustments. The egotism of youth, however, had burned itself low in Jerry now, and though he still talked of himself, they spoke most often not of persons and things, but of relationships and values, of motives and interpretations. With

his mother's hand resting lightly on his arm, as they sat reading or talking or in silence, the man of forty fell again under the gentle domination of his childhood; the stress and strain of business activity relaxed their tug upon him, and he became a mystic.

It was as if, with the dropping of the veil before his mother's eyes, another had been as slowly drawn away from before his own inner vision. It was not so much a religious experience as a spiritual one. And as he came to see the things of the inner life with her eyes, so she came to look out into the material world through the eyes of her son; and in the effort to make this real to her, the man of forty began to see what the man of twenty-five and thirty-five had merely taken for granted. Unconsciously he struggled into a strength and beauty of expression that made him wonder at times why she caught at his hand with both of hers to press it close against her breast.

In spite of all this, however, the mother knew, with the keen intuition of the blind, that though he never spoke of it to her, the old fascination of the strange and far-away had never loosed its hold upon him. Now and then, too, his father spoke to her of the books that lay upon his table, and of the long, restless tramping in his room above the sitting room when she had gone to bed. He was a just man, the boy's father, and he knew what the store was—he had spent thirty years there himself.

The spring that Jerry was forty-five his mother quite unexpectedly asked him, as an especial favor to her, to take a trip through the West. It was to be a trial trip, as it were, possibly preliminary to others even across the water. Jerry at first vigorously resisted the idea—it would be too hard for her, and what about the business? But in the end he yielded to her entreaties and his father's boastful independence in regard to the store. Then there were plans and preparations, frequent misgivings and manifold urgings; then, quite suddenly, a week before he was to leave, his father sickened and died—

as quietly and simply as he had lived. "I'm sorry it had to be just now, Jerry," he muttered apologetically at the last. "You've been a good boy. Maybe you can get to go a little later on."

In the months that followed Jerry grew quite gray and began to stoop a trifle. His mother's frantic confession in the first agony of her grief, that his simple-hearted, silent father had been more to her, far more, than he himself could ever be, broke down the inner barriers he had so carefully reared during the years for a shelter against the swirling seas of unrest, and threw him out upon the black waters of uncertainty. Cairo, Bombay, Calcutta, Singapore and Tokio—again they whirled about before his eyes in a far wilder dance than upon the night of his renunciation on the dusty road. They called and beckoned to him—mocking mirages toward which he stumbled across a desert of arid years. What can the disappointment of youth know of the failure of middle age? A fool he had been to believe that gain can ever come of unavailing sacrifice!

Doggedly, however, bit by bit, with the hard won skill of twenty-five years' experience, he repaired his walls at the cost of infinite pains, and sat down behind them once more in comparative security. He sold a half-interest in the store so that he could be more with his mother, for whom time still continued its tender ministrations. With a piano player he explored the realm of music for her, and found for himself a new country. He spent more time in his garden and read more essays.

Cameron became a full professor and the head of his department. One day following the announcement of this, Jerry went into the city to see him. Yes, Cameron remembered him. He had been interested in geology at one time, had he not? Cameron also remembered this. He was just about to go home; wouldn't Keester step over and meet his wife and his sons? One of these was studying medicine in the university, and the other had a fine position in a bank. Yes, they had

made a great find in the Smoky River chalk beds, had managed to get out about everything worth having before the other fellows got wind of the strike.

Jerry walked along beside the geologist down the broad avenue toward the glorious riot of a winter sunset. Apparently he was much interested in a comprehensive description of the Kansas find, but his eyes were on the sky, and suddenly his long face brightened as if some inner restraint had been abruptly removed. "Isn't that *tremendous!*" he exclaimed, no longer able to contain himself, as he indicated the sky from horizon to zenith with the sweep of a lean forefinger.

"It is that," Cameron assented with a swift, upward glance. "Now, as I was saying, the strata had evidently shifted so that—"

"I had some hollyhocks growing in my yard last summer," Jerry went on composedly, "that looked as if they might have been dipped in just such a mass of color. Cameron, did you ever look at a sunset until it fairly *hurt* you?"

The geologist looked puzzled. "Well, not often. You see, I have made a specialty of the earth, as it were, and left the sky to the astronomers."

"They are *both* of them mine," Jerry returned simply. "I get more out of them every year."

The visit was not much of a success in itself, but Jerry went home that evening satisfied. He had reinforced his walls in a weak spot.

A few more years passed uneventfully, and then at fifty he suddenly found himself alone. For some time the possibility of this had not been unforeseen, but the blow when it fell was little softened by this knowledge. As soon as the first bewilderment of his loss had passed away, he became consumed with a desire to get away from everything that spoke to him of it. The battlements of his walled city, attacked thus from within, gave way again, and the waters rushed in once more—not, however, the cruel, ravenous sea he had looked out upon in former years with anxious eye, but a

calmer, though no less irresistible tide that crept slowly up about him until he felt himself gently lifted up and carried out upon the open ocean. Cairo, Bombay, Calcutta, Singapore and Tokio—no longer they danced mockingly upon the horizon, but lifted fairy minarets and squat pagodas against the tranquil rose-gray of an evening sky, and from them came the friendly murmuring call of a babel of tongues.

The station agent swelled with pride and the thought of a fat commission as he told in town of the ticket sold to Keester *straight through to Yokohama!* The old German farmers were gone now, and their sons listened with ill concealed envy when Jerry announced that in view of a contemplated absence of a year or more, he had sold his remaining interest in the store to his partner. He was in a fret of eagerness now to be away. Bristol had suddenly grown small and mean, and the house, with its every piece of furniture in the place it had occupied for twenty years, oppressed him. It was early spring, but he found no joy in the coming of his old friends, the hyacinths and tulips.

He reached San Francisco on the afternoon of the day before the boat was to sail. With feverish impatience he hurried his baggage over to the wharf and saw it safely stowed aboard. It was a monster ship—he had seen some big ones on Lake Michigan, but never one like this—and he turned again and again to drink in the majesty of its lines as he made his way back along the pier to the street.

In Market Street he boarded an up-town car, and after a time reached the park, through which he slowly made his way to the bluff overlooking the sea. It was cloudy and the water looked cold and gray. The fresh salt breeze revived him somewhat, but he

dropped wearily down upon a bench, too dead tired to analyze his emotions at the first sight of the thing he had dreamed of for so many years.

Far out near the horizon he could see a black speck with an attendant fine trail of black smoke. Perhaps it was as large a boat as the one he had left an hour ago. Five thousand miles! He shuddered at the cold stretch of it; how easy it had been to leap that span beside his reading lamp before the open fire at home! Suddenly he felt a light, familiar pressure upon his sleeve, and turned quickly about at the thrill of it. "Mother!" The word came to his lips but went unuttered. His arm, as he shifted uneasily about upon the hard bench, had brushed against an overhanging bush.

Then all at once the hyacinths and tulips, the piano player and the rooms with each piece of furniture in the place it had occupied for twenty years, the straight, friendly little houses back of the elms and maples beside the road that stretched up the hill and past the water tank—quite suddenly all these called to him with imperious voices, rising above the roar of the surf on the beach below. He got up stiffly, and then, gaining speed with every stride, fairly ran through the park.

A little later he was on board the boat again and at the purser's window. Could he get his luggage out right away? Why—yes, if he had to; what was the matter? Sudden call home? That was too bad. A suspicious moisture in the wonderfully kindly eyes of the lone passenger moved the purser to an unwanted sympathy.

In return, however, Jerry smiled in a manner that more than repaid the effort. "Oh, well," he muttered as he turned away, "maybe I can make it a little later on."



**S**OME of us get in the limelight before we have time to put on our make-up.

# DAMON OF THE LINER

By RICHARD FECHHEIMER

**I**T was that impersonally emotional moment when the engine of the steamship throbbed and those who had never crossed before thrilled with the first conviction of a visit abroad. Swiftly the neat liner backed into the stream.

Flags and handkerchiefs nodded farewells between the voyagers and the friends ashore. The liner slipped alongside the pier and the frenzy of departure reached its most spectacular height. Gradually the one dear face in the group became a miniature in a myriad of tintypes. And after this the piggies on the pier were obscure, and the travelers turned toward one another.

The Man and his Friend dropped into their deck chairs and draped their rugs with clumsiness born of unfamiliarity with ocean travel. They were off to find out how cheaply one might live in Paris—one for an optimistic magazine, the other owing to the exigencies of a barren bank account. As a tribute to the power of publicity, the agent of the steamship line had allotted to this pair a desirable cabin on the promenade deck with a private bath. The men drew from their pockets "steamer letters," in which relations exhort the blessings of a preoccupied Deity and friends invoke "a wonderful time."

The Friend nicked elbows with the Man as the steamship was entering the lower bay. The Man looked up and saw the Girl behind a forest of orchids. After he had contemplated her mad-dening blonde beauty, the charm of the gracefully active lace veil and the book in her hand, he saw that she was surrounded by Mother, Father and Sisters Three.

His steamer letters were crushed between *nonchalant* fingers. Thoughts of Paris, of his pocket filled with letters of introduction, of the friend by his side, vanished before the fascination of this inspiring fellow passenger.

The Girl's maid, a wholesome young woman, appeared with a rug and cushions. Next, Mother's maid assisted her with these accessories of the voyage. Father was stowed away beneath gaudy woolens by a venerable valet, and Sisters Three, under the ministrations of the extensive "*bedienung*," were arranged for the trip.

The Friend, who wrote for a magazine, made a socialistic comment and then admitted the impressiveness of the well served family. The Man's little collection of express company cheques burned scornfully over his heart. Then he looked again at the Girl from under the visor of his cap.

"Rot, man!" said the Friend. "You're bewitched by those three idiotic servants, two women and a man, who unambitiously choose for life three meals a day and a good bed. It isn't the girl."

"I hope not," said the Man.

"Perhaps she's the same sort," persisted the Friend. "Suppose, if you had your man to fetch and carry, to array you in your dinner clothes, to bring you tobacco and a brandy and soda, she would glance your way?"

"It does matter," assented the Man sadly.

"I'll tell you what I'll do." This Friend was true and helpful. "I'll be your valet to Cherbourg. I insist on my half of the cabin and a drink with you. Let's see if the girl will love the

master for the man. She might, and we'll stage the thing properly."

"Don't be a fool," growled the Man, and the conspiracy therefore was soon in operation.

"What will you have, sir?" asked the Friend, hanging over the Man's chair.

The Girl looked up from her current fiction.

"Nothing just now," answered the Man. "I'll not shave until dinner."

"Very good, sir," replied the Friend-valet, and he vanished to the cabin where "Marius the Epicurean" was waiting. The Man blinked pleasantly. At first he thought the humor of the situation was the source of his happiness. Then he half admitted that "being waited on" was pleasant. Surging with enthusiasm, he crossed and stood by the rail, looking out on the sea. He was confident now. He glanced casually at the Girl nestling in her rugs and pillows.

Sisters Three giggled. Mother closed her eyes. Father, not yielding to the tranquillity of travel, was striding the deck.

"Do you dare me?" cried one of the Sisters. The next moment she had approached the Man. She curtsied and said:

"My sister wants to know what you're thinking about."

The Man turned. He thought of the Friend putting buttons on his shirt. An easy assurance was upon him; that generates inspiration. With scarcely a smile and no evidence of interest, he answered:

"I was thinking—what a lot of water!"

"Oh!"

The Girl was too angry for words. She emerged from her rugs as the lady in the circus breaks through the paper hoop.

"I am sorry," she gasped. "My sister—"

The Man held up a restraining hand. Then the Friend appeared.

"You forgot matches, sir." He retired, and the Man detected his smile of slight contempt.

"I said it," continued the Girl, "quite as one might about any other man."

The Man was civilly inclusive.

"Do you mind my smoking?" he said.

The Man was asked to dine that night with drowsy Mother, restless Father and Sisters Three.

As a valet, the Friend was cynical and useful.

"Suppose they ask what you do for a living?" suggested the Friend, as he poured whiskey into a tumbler.

"That is none of their affair," retorted the Man, now frankly defiant in his perfection of appearance.

"Good luck to you!" called the Friend, and the Man joined his dinner companions.

He and the Joy of Living were on speaking terms. He was with the "nicest people on the boat."

The Girl was aloof and friendly alternately. She delighted him, and Father condescended to laugh at his host of good stories. Mother mentioned names—illustrious names—with *brawura*, and Sisters Three formed a picturesque background, so the Man thought.

Suddenly he spied in a corner of the saloon the Friend, his cherished companion—the Damon of his Pythias, not beamed upon by the "nicest people on the boat," but by six grotesquely homely maids. The Man sickened at the sight. The Friend stuck his tongue in his cheek and winked bravely.

"Do you feel the motion?" asked the Girl.

But the Friend with the maids was Banquo's ghost at the feast. In vain the Man insisted to himself his chum's own fault in the matter, but somehow the glamour of his own companions seemed to fade.

"Don't be ill," cautioned Mother roguishly. "We must have a man about."

A great cigar with Father scarcely consoled the Man for the painful degeneration of the Friend.

While patrolling the deck with Father, the Man was accosted by the Purser.

"Pardon," said the official, "but this man—with you is your valet? We thought at first he was your friend."

The Man did not reply, and asked for a match.

"He's sitting now with the other servants. He objected."

"Have him well taken care of. He is my friend. A good servant is always one's friend."

It is wise to dismiss the Purser with an epigram.

Father then delighted in tales of servant troubles at his string of country residences, and the march continued.

During the next day the dread case of *Mal de Mer versus the People* was decided with varying results.

Drowsy Mother retired to a deluge of toilet water and an occasional treatment of cocaine. Sisters Three caromed in anything but leisurely fashion from the dining saloon during luncheon. Two-thirds of the "*bedienung*" succumbed. But the leading man and woman in romantic modern fashion defy always the horrors of a pitching craft. Moreover, the Friend and the Girl's maid completed a wonderfully healthy quartet, which enjoyed an exclusive promenade deck.

"Isn't my maid wonderful?" observed the Girl as they walked. "She reminds me of a sea nymph." The Girl had contracted the habit of classical allusions.

The Man assented. "Yes—and I call my chap Sinbad the Sailor."

The Girl had read her "Arabian Nights." "But has he an Old Man of the Sea?" she returned.

"You bet he has," grinned the Man. "And isn't your maid too dressy for a conventional nymph?"

"Your man is very haughty," said the Girl. "My maid says he merely nods and hasn't spoken at all."

The Man smiled at the thought of his erudite Damon discussing Pater and Swinburne and the Debussy music poems with the buxom lady's maid.

"He's very quiet," he admitted.

"My maid is so lonely with the other servants ill. I have given her my jigsaws, but she doesn't like puzzles."

"Then she would loathe my man."

"But isn't it unjust—we having this comfy time and he reading—and she with no one to talk to?"

"I am sorry." The Man had reached that zenith of firmness which invariably precedes surrender during a sex-against-sex conflict. "I have no voice in my man's social relations."

"But couldn't you make a suggestion—to—what's-his-name?"

"Couldn't possibly." The man knew the value of evasiveness. "I should be snubbed for my trouble."

But the Girl was used to her own way. She stopped.

"I don't think you are particularly nice," she said, as she steadied herself with one hand on the rail to depict a perfect picture of indignant rage.

Instantly the Man wondered whether his friend's sense of humor would extend to a limited acquaintance with a maid.

"I am sorry—" he began.

"It is a silly thing to quarrel about," she admitted, her wrath now ebbing. "Perhaps we've seen too much of each other."

These last words were as a prod of a matador to a bull. The Girl seemed to the Man indescribably lovely. He was the wretched sort to whom the caprice of another appeals vastly. Besides, her companionship was too dear to him. He thought of three endless days—of solitude. To consort with his Friend was now out of the question. Evidently he meant so little to her, and his ambition was aroused.

He gripped the rail as relief from his approaching humiliation.

Their fingers touched.

"Will you pardon me?" His voice trembled. "I shall speak to him at once."

The Friend was standing far in the bow.

"What's up?" he asked.

"Let's have a drink," said the Man. "Come on."

"Too soon after luncheon. How can you leave her?"

"Come on, please," begged the Man. He started and the Friend followed.

Promenade deck cabins have their disadvantages. It is convenient to run in for one's pipe or to change one's tie to suit the mood, or for lighter literature. But these thoroughfare rooms are not devised for such delicate ordeals as the discussion which confronted the Man.

In fact, when the Friend laughed heartily at the turn of events, the Girl changed her position on the deck and stood near the open window. Why not? She had a justifiable desire to hear the grave subject argued, and she thought she might discover how seriously she interested her *cavalier du voyage*.

"Good drama!" laughed the Friend. "So the haughty millionaire's daughter gives her ultimatum! Oh, the power of wrath!"

"I don't think it is so funny." The Man was rather a dejected picture on the edge of the bunk.

"Here, give me the whiskey," commanded the master of the situation, "and plead your case like an indicted assassin. You've a lot at stake, old man."

"You say the people interest you," urged the Man. "Here's your chance. Study the maid. She might—"

"Good heavens, that's all I've been doing!" The Friend drained his glass. "I know the relative contempt in which each loyal servitor holds his family. I know enough of the emotions of servants to write a sequel to 'Esther Waters' or start an employment agency."

"She might be an interesting creature. You don't care. You enjoy playing the part. You told me that last night, when we were playing double Canfield."

"I can't be bored—not even for you. She looks like a tenacious female—an exacting sort, like her mistress. I should have to marry her probably at Cherbourg and start an inn on the pier."

"Damn it, old man"—the patience of the chief pretender was reaching the point of explosion—"you got me into this! Did I ask you to play my serv-

ant? Did I suggest this asinine plot? Am I having any sort of a time living on the brink of a volcano? My nerves are all gone, and what am I getting out of it?"

"Romance," grinned the fiendish Friend. "Romance—a parade ground for your imagination—a habitable castle in Spain. Don't commiserate yourself, but rather your dupe, the haughty beauty who is playing a shipboard Pauline to the most conscienceless Claude of modern times. Think of the lady's chagrin when she knows that you are but a penniless charmer instead of a 'good catch'—that you know only four persons in the Social Register, because you've interviewed them for the Sunday magazine on how to bring up a family so excellently. Oh, you know, this is funny!"

"You've said enough." The Man was very solemn. "Don't keep up the farce any longer."

"It's too late." The Friend was alarmed. "Tell me one thing. Do you care enough for the girl to make my sacrifice worth while? If you do, I am game."

The Man put down his tumbler and rested his hand on the Friend's arm.

"That's just it. I am beginning to realize a great many things—now. I didn't believe that one could get caught on anything so unstable as a steamship. And I *am* caught. I didn't know it when I came in that door. I love that girl."

"What!" exclaimed the Friend. "Where are you going?"

"To tell her, of course."

"That you love her? Don't be mad!"

"No, idiot—that you are not my servant—that you are as superior to me as the sky is to the sea. I don't know what else, but don't fret; she'll never know I care. It's better that way."

The girl had watched the tea bearing steward pass into the companionway. The results of her eavesdropping had bewildered her, and she had selected no mode of procedure. But the Man

was too self-engrossed to notice her changed attitude.

He blurted out the story, blamed himself sincerely, asked no pardon, punctuated his narrative with trite observations: "It's all in the game." He loved her for her stoical reception of his tale. He did not dare ask her what she thought. He expected no uninvited forgiveness.

"Of course," he closed, "you can tell your people I tried to kiss you."

"No," replied the girl, "I shall say you bored me." Stupid man! He saw only blighting scorn.

How they gossiped on the ship!

The next morning the dressmaker, bound on a fashion seeking expedition, averred that "she and the gentleman with the 'vallyay' have had a spat." The woman from Omaha observed that "she and the 'vallyay' have had their chairs moved together." The aged maiden who wore veils of vivid hues insisted that there had been a formal proposal on the starboard bow at nine-twenty on the preceding night, but the fat old man with the Elk emblem knew that "he was sitting alone in the smoking room until midnight, and didn't know much about the tariff."

The family of the girl, recovering from seasickness, were haughtily indifferent, and the girl remained glued to her chair. She indulged him with three greetings a day—the formula one applies at sea to those whom one wishes to ignore. The day before landing, the interested fellow passengers agreed unanimously that she looked worn; and an afternoon sensation was caused by the mysterious young man playing shuffleboard democratically. The funeral and inevitable concert passed without event, and the next day they were moneychanging and packing.

A goddess of the night had dropped her string of brilliants, and Cherbourg and the bay were formed. The passengers bound for Paris were mingling with the hysterical porters. The lighter was steaming from the maternal breast of the giant ship. The "first-time-overs" were jubilant with anticipation. The reserved travelers were

numb at the thought of the all-night journey.

The Man walked to the stern of the little steamer and watched the great ship slip into the blackness of the night. At least, there had been a four-day carnival, and he counted confidently on the famed diversions of Paris. But he had much to repent, to regret. He had not appreciated to the full the precious four days; no, one never does—not if one were to mark the minutes with supreme consciousness. That is a nasty little trick of the Love God—the way he blurs the present and illuminates the past with a cruel, blinding light.

It was also a heartless Fate that provided so beautiful a dream at the outset of his holiday, as if to turn all other episodes, by comparison, to Dead Sea fruit. He smiled sadly at the thought of "other episodes."

The Girl was standing beside him. He dared not look, lest that malevolent pair—Fate and the Love God—would whisk away the vision of the fair girl.

"Won't you come to see us," she asked, "in Paris, at the Athénée?"

He turned, and before his gaze the lights of Cherbourg danced an Oriental measure. He was blinded by the moisture in his eyes, and his "Thank you" was not heard. She had joined her family.

When the customs officer asked, "*Qu'est-ce que vous avez, monsieur?*" the Man was tempted to reply, "A heart full of gratitude."

It was months later—in a very expensive apartment at the Carlton, in London.

A melting father was pacing the thick rose-covered carpet. A girl was sitting in a chair of tapestry.

"But I don't understand. He hasn't a cent, and you—well, you—"

"If any girl in the world," she interrupted, "can marry because she loves—she must be I."

This was a good argument and caused a man to cable to a friend:

"Change valet to best man. October wedding."

# WEEK ENDS

By THOMAS L. MASSON

**W**HAT is a Week End? We often hear this term used.

There must always be two parties to a week end—the victim and the hostess. The host doesn't count. He submits because he cannot help himself. He is really worse off, however, than the visitor or victim, for that person can go back on Monday morning, whereas he has to stay on.

The idea of giving the week end, on the part of the hostess, is that she may convince the victim that she has a better house than someone else. She doesn't always succeed, of course. Oftentimes she is under a delusion. She thinks she has succeeded, but she hasn't.

Another idea is to show one victim that she can have another victim, and that these two victims can still be shown to a third—or a fourth—according to the capacity of the house.

The victims usually arrive on the same train, or within one train of each other. Their main business, in the part they are to play, is to wear smart clothes, eat food, refrain from getting too drunk, tell witty stories and view the premises.

This latter process is inevitable. Every victim must be shown around. If he has been there before, then he accompanies the other victims with an air of complete ownership.

"Now here," he announces grandly in advance, "we are coming to a room that I regard as," etc., etc.

When each victim has seen everything, he vies with the other victims in telling the hostess that there is nothing like it anywhere in this country. The hostess settles back and accepts this as the price the victims are paying for the week end. For only the servants come in for real money. And woe be to the luckless weekender who fails to hold up his end!

Not that he suffers physically, but there is a mental atmosphere more potent than material things in its effect.

On Monday morning the victims depart, declaring they have had the time of their lives. Then they pass the next two hours, going back to town, in comparing this establishment with others they have visited. And when they get through there isn't a great deal left of it, as a rule.



## DEC E I T

By A. A. LINDSLEY

"**O**H, what a tangled web we weave  
When first we practise to deceive!"  
But once experience we get,  
We do it pretty smooth, you bet!

# THE TIGER

By JULIAN HAWTHORNE

**I**N a dark and rubbishy underground bookshop near Union Square, known, I had supposed, to none save myself, I met Jebb, whom I had not seen or heard of for several years past. He took my hand in the grasp which was, like himself, quiet and strong, and said that this was a bit of jolly good luck.

"Just up from Yucatan," he said in reply to my queries. "Round and about as usual, you know," he added, smiling.

Jebb was a captain, retired, of the English army, and had lived long in India, making efforts more than commonly successful to solve that enduring mystery: Are there mystic brotherhoods in Tibet? I don't know; but Jebb, if anybody, did. I suspected him of being himself a Mahatma. Aside from the occult, however, his adventures all over the planet had been remarkable and unintermittent. Not that he sought them; they came to him.

There was little at first sight noticeable about him. A strong figure of middle height, the ineffaceable military carriage still traceable; a square, compact head on a short neck; dark eyes under a wide, grave brow; black hair cropped short. He was always carelessly but correctly clad. When he smiled you liked and trusted him, and when he spoke you felt the power and charm of intellect. He was as simple as nature, but a man of the world and of culture. He was a bachelor, but all women made a brother or father of him; and men in his company felt an impulse to be at their best.

I said: "I got back from India myself a month ago. My wife and I are

spending the summer in a bungalow down on Long Island. Come and stay with us; nobody else will be there except Armitage—and a delightful Secret!"

"I will come, of course. Is Armitage anything new?"

"I found him last February in a native village near Jubbulpore; he will be your friend right off, or never. Imagine a Harvard graduate, good family, lots of money, going straight to the Punjab and spending twenty solid years alone with the village Hindoos! Not a missionary—not even a clergyman; but taking care of 'em, teaching 'em, and—if they feel that way—baptising 'em. And comes near knowing 'em, into the bargain!"

Jebb looked pleased. "And you brought him back with you?"

"He was coming, anyway, to attend to some home business—and also on account of the Secret!"

Jebb laughed. "Am I to hear the Secret?"

"Yes, if you're good, and Armitage pleases. So far, it is known only to myself and my wife, and to Hakoshiri."

"Oh, you have old Hako with you still, then!"

"It's his whim to continue to protect and cherish us."

Here old Melchior, the bookseller, bobbed up with a dusty volume.

"Here we are, Captain," he croaked; "I knew we had it—'Demon Possession in China,' by the Reverend John Nevins."

"Then," said I, "we'll catch the two-thirty and be in time for dinner."

It was not a real bungalow; it had two stories and was made of plastered

brick instead of adobe. It stood on high ground between Great Peconic Bay and Hampton Beach, and no place within a hundred miles of New York was cooler.

But on that starless and moonless evening no air was stirring, and it was suffocatingly hot. In the drawing-room my wife was flat on the sofa with a heat headache. Jebb, Armitage and I sat out on the north veranda—a sort of outdoor room—smoking and perspiring; wire gauze and joss sticks stayed the tides of mosquitoes, and Japanese lanterns glimmered yellow, red and blue. The others—old Indians—seemed less oppressed than I by that devastating heat; but we all had our coats off. It didn't feel like Long Island, and the faint aromatic scent of the joss sticks suggested scenes remote.

"You remember that last evening in Bombay that we spent at old Dr. Benson's, up on Malabar Hill," said I to Armitage; "doesn't this remind you of it?"

No man who voluntarily does what Armitage had done can be an ordinary person. Some of our rich young men spend their time and money driving four-in-hand coaches in England; others shoot big game in Africa; others give suppers in Paris. It had been Armitage's choice to live half his lifetime among an alien race, seeing no white face for years at a time, communing with his own thoughts, wrestling solitary with the spiritual prejudices of four thousand years, abandoning the world for the chance of helping a few beleaguered souls. His New England forefathers had been witch hanging Puritans, Calvinist ministers, narrow, deep-rooted men, conservative pillars of the state. Armitage had broken with all their traditions, rejected their creed, become a rebel and an exile—hoping, perhaps, vicariously to atone for their errors.

Ordinary, even to look at, he was not; he was a handbreadth over six feet tall, meager as one of his own Hindoo dependents, with a sad, high-featured face and deep set eyes, projecting forward

on a long neck, like one of those Egyptian deities with bird heads. His voice was muffled and timid and his bearing shy; but he had the friendliest smile I ever saw, and he said unusual, captivating things. There was a sort of awkward gracefulness in his movements. He and Jebb, outwardly so dissimilar, had become interwoven as to inward spiritual sympathies at the first touch.

He was seldom prompt in his replies; he turned a thing over in his mind. "Well, I feel different," he finally said, with a deprecating smile.

"Naturally you would," murmured Jebb.

"Oh, well," I rejoined, "of course there are no little brown Karaits out in the compound to sting you to death in fifteen minutes, nor tigers mousing over in the jungle, nor vultures whetting their beaks on the Towers of Silence, nor—"

"Nor jugglers doing the basket trick," put in Jebb, laughing.

"By the way," I said, "there was a genuine Hindoo fakir at the vaudeville in town the other night."

Armitage leaned forward.

"Did he do what the fakir at Benson's did that night?" he asked.

"Was that anything out of the common?" Jebb wanted to know.

"What Benson's fakir did," said I, "was to make a live beast out of nothing. A savage little beast, too, about the size of a terrier, but like nothing I ever saw before. It had claws like a cat, but a spotted hide like a hyena. It snarled and spit—didn't it, Armitage?—and snapped at your leg. Then the fakir hit it with his pipe, and it vanished right there before us, in a moment."

Jebb glanced inquiringly at Armitage.

"It seemed genuine to me—it might be, you know," said the latter.

Jebb's experience had covered every sort of magic, white and black, by experts of all degrees, from roadside beggars to true Yogis.

"Well, once in an age, I suppose," he admitted.

"It was done on the bare floor of the dining room, in full light," I prattled on. "The fellow came in just after coffee. He was naked all but his breechclout and a cloth mask."

"A mask!" echoed Jebb.

"He explained to Benson, I believe, that his beauty had been spoiled by a tiger, or something like that. Come to think of it, the fellow at the vaudeville wore a mask, too; but that was a regular *bal-masqué* one, and he was dressed up in a white caftan."

Armitage's eyes became intent.

"And did he create a beast out of air?" asked Jebb.

"Oh, he did nothing wonderful. But how would you explain the Benson phenomenon? It came out of the end of the pipe that the fellow was tooting on, and grew in a minute from the size of a field mouse to a dog. The pipe itself had been nothing but a willow twig in the beginning. And the creature disappeared like a soap bubble."

There was a pause. The air seemed to be getting hotter and deader. It was very dark; but as I sat facing outward I had a momentary impression as of a part of the darkness setting itself in motion and gliding to the left. Just then, from somewhere above us, came the low music of a woman's voice, crooning a lullaby in a foreign tongue.

"Dear, don't you think that child might like a cup of gruel, or something? She seems wakeful." This was the voice of my wife, faint from the sofa within.

I looked at Armitage, for this concerned his Secret.

"Oh, no, thank you," he said. "They will do very well. This weather is almost like home to them."

Jebb lit one of his black cheroots; the light of the match glimmered on his quiet visage.

"As to the beast," he said, "you've mulled a good deal over these matters, Armitage. What would be your theory about it?"

Armitage shook his head. "The philosophy of creation is a big subject."

"Just a hint, I mean—I've thought about it, too."

A mosquito which had evaded our defenses jeered at the portals of my ear. I missed him.

"God didn't create mosquitoes, nor centipedes, nor tigers and hyenas, nor poison ivy, nor any form of evil, spiritual or incarnate—not in the first instance, that is," said Armitage reluctantly. "Their origin was the evil of man—the atmospheres of hell. Animals stand for human passions and propensities, good and bad."

"Yes; but your fakir produced his beast on the spot."

"We have materializations at spiritualist seances. Orientals have carried the thing a step further."

"I know—'precipitations' and so on; good old Blavatsky!"

Armitage dropped his voice, but spoke more earnestly. "Beyond that, I believe that sudden and intense outbursts of evil passions—especially among Hindoos—may, when conditions favor, generate such things immediately and spontaneously. When the high note of the vibration had passed, they would vanish. That sounds crude!" he smiled.

Jebb got up from his chair and began pacing up and down the veranda with his hands behind him. As for me, this sort of talk was beyond my depth. Moreover, I recognized, in the latter intonations of Armitage's voice, that he was climbing on his hobby—a strange, spiritual mysticism, the ideas of a lonely enthusiast or fanatic, developed in prolonged solitude, unchecked by criticism and contact with the common sensible world. He had given me occasional glimpses of it, but it was Greek to my comprehension. Now that two augurs had got together, however, there was no telling where they would arrive; and I thought it a good opportunity to forage for something cool to drink.

So I stepped round the corner of the veranda, where I found Hakoshiri squatted on a mat, slant-eyed and serene as usual, fanning himself delicately with a reed fan.

"Hako, we're dying of thirst—at least I am. Do you think we could get

a little brandy and seltzer, for instance?"

Hakoshiri was a prince in his own Dai Nippon, I believe; but he had opinions as to the dignity of service, domestic or other, and had been superintending our household affairs for seven years past. He had other opinions, or convictions, which I respected but had never attempted to understand.

At my accost he did not get to his feet as an Occidental would, but rose erect spontaneously and magically, as a jinn from the bowels of the earth. Hako had European clothes, which he wore when he went forth into the world; but at my request he used his native costume when within home boundaries.

"I get it, sir, all right," the soft, smiling voice slid out. "You think you die thirsty?" He chuckled. "Not you die tonight; somebody die, maybe—not you."

"What are you talking about? Tonight? Someone of us? What ails you?"

Hako chuckled. "Not us; but somebody here—you see, maybe. I smell him." He made a gesture with his fan toward the outer universe.

Now Hako, since I had known him, had occasionally betrayed symptoms of some abnormal faculty which our philosophers would term clairvoyant. As I have said, I have a respect for that sort of thing, but as I don't understand it, I can't say I believe in it. What this Oriental had said had no rational meaning; but the clammy heat had put an edge on my nerves, and I just happened at that moment to recall a moving shadow in the darkness outside which I had seen, or thought I saw. "Smell him!" Smell what? Burglars don't attack a summer bungalow with no valuables and three men in it.

"Hako," I said a little testily, "the night is bad enough as it is; oblige me by keeping that sort of stuff to yourself. Things don't happen in a respectable establishment like this. Will you get the drinks?"

He smiled and bowed. What a

countenance—all amiable simplicity and mystery impenetrable!

"All right, sir, I get it. Right away, sir—yes, all right."

I went back to my augurs, the perspiration running down my nose.

Jebb was sitting on a corner of the table, with one foot on the side of Armitage's chair. Armitage's face, dimly shown by the lanterns, wore the rapt expression whose purport I knew.

"But why Hindoos especially?" Jebb was asking.

"Chiefly because of their caste system, of course."

"I'm not sure that I follow you."

"Its effect in the course of generations is to take the reins of conduct out of the hands of the individual and make him the puppet of the caste."

"Ah, I see! Breaks down the barriers—"

"Of personality—yes. Selfhood, I prefer to call it. Well, selfhood gives a man his choice between right and wrong; but for a caste man, if his caste says so, wrong is right."

"He forfeits his moral responsibility?"

Armitage was now in full tide. "There's a fathomless reservoir of evil in human nature. Ordinary people get of it only so much as belongs to them, so to say, but the fences of the caste man are down, and upon occasion the whole concentrated force of hell may rush through him into manifestation. So what I meant was, that it wouldn't be so surprising if the evil passions of a caste Hindoo, lashed to fury, should materialize temporarily in some corresponding bestial or noxious form—since the force to produce such an effect would be immeasurably greater than with us."

Jebb tossed away the butt of his cheroot.

"By Jove!" he muttered, under his mustache. "By Jove!" he repeated, beginning to pace up and down once more.

"Didn't you tell me," said I to Armitage, "that your Hindoo converts were the most angelic people in the world?"

"Yes, the principle works both ways," he said, interlacing and disengaging the long fingers of his hands, and speaking more to himself than to me. "The rest of us must first overcome self in order to admit the divine spirit; but, in the caste Hindoo, the divine spirit meets no opposition, and the regenerate personality gains full sway at once."

Hakoshiri, in his girdled silken robes, entered with the tray and placed it on the table. "Thank you—I'll attend to it, Hako," said I; and he bowed, smiling, and retired.

As I mixed the beverages, my mind hovered about the only one of Armitage's converts of whom I knew much.

She was Amesha, wife of the headman of the village, Dhunni Singh, a strange creature, feared not so much because of his violent temper and administrative influence as because he was believed to exercise powers of witchcraft.

Amesha had a baby, a little girl. Afterwards she fell ill, and Armitage tended her and cured her. She was a sweet, submissive woman, but very intelligent. She wanted to learn about Christianity; Armitage instructed her, converted her and finally—though fiercely opposed by her husband—baptized her. She knew that the step would make her a pariah among her own people, and even put her life in peril; but her faith gave her strength in her submissiveness. Dhunni Singh ceremoniously cursed her and drove her from his house. Armitage took her to live among his other converts. He afterwards baptized her little daughter.

At this juncture, in an excursion out of Jubbulpore, I stumbled upon the village and made Armitage's acquaintance. We were friends at once. I became a worshiper of Amesha and the little girl. Armitage had been planning a visit to America, and now made up his mind to take Amesha and her daughter with him. There had been indications of trouble brewing from Dhunni Singh; and on the night before our departure an attempt to kidnap

the woman was nearly successful. In the early dawn of the next day, as our little procession of bullock wagons passed along the dusty road toward Jubbulpore, I saw, as we turned the corner by a clump of stunted trees, a dark, lean visage peering out at us between the leaves; and its features twisted themselves into an expression which—to speak moderately—left an unpleasant impression on my mind.

But the journey to Bombay and our week's stay there were uneventful, though I noticed that Armitage was watchful and preoccupied, and the episode of the fakir at Dr. Benson's seemed to affect him a good deal. Amesha at all times manifested a celestial gentleness and serenity; and the little girl, with her jewel eyes and delicate beauty, was a bronze cherub from Heaven. We reached New York in due course; Armitage accepted my proposal to spend the summer with us, bringing Amesha with him; and now the Secret is revealed! But no one outside the bungalow knew it.

I dried my eyebrows with my handkerchief, and said: "Say when, gentlemen!"

The oppressiveness of the air was unaccountable. Malabar Hill had been cool compared with this. Decidedly, it had got on my nerves.

The three of us had just taken our first swallow, when once more my wife's voice reached me from the sofa in the sitting room. Would I please come to her a moment? Her voice had an intonation which prompted me to go quickly.

"Dear, here is Amesha wants to say good-bye to Mr. Armitage," was what I heard as I advanced into the semi-darkness. "I don't understand—has anything happened?"

"Say good-bye?" I echoed in astonishment. "Where is she?"

Then from the shadows on my right flowed out the melted music that served Amesha for a voice.

"I are here, sahib—and the little one."

I saw her plainly now, and it seemed

to be by the light of her own presence.

She was dressed in the costume of her country—robes that flowed like her voice, and were confined round the middle of her slender body and draped over her left shoulder. Their colors were like the tender and harmonious hues of earliest dawn. Against her bosom leaned the little one, its tiny hand resting tranquilly on the mother's arm. Amesha's black hair was bound closely to her small, symmetrical head; delicate bracelets of gold and of glass were on her slender wrists, and round her neck was a fine gold chain from which hung a cross of gold. The child was naked, every plump limb delectable to the eye, and on her little breast hung a golden cross.

As they appeared motionless and serene there, they recalled what is purest and divinest in Raphael's pictures of the Holy Mother and Child; but the softness of Amesha's mouth and the shadowy darkness of her eyes were beyond the skill of any artist.

"What's this about saying good-bye to Mr. Armitage?" I demanded. "He isn't going away—and when he does, you'll go with him."

Amesha smiled faintly. "I not know; I feel perhaps God means we go tonight. Something come—so!" She threw out her right arm and waved the hand inward again toward her forehead and breast. "I not know; it is perhaps not; but I think I like say him good-bye, now—if he please!"

First Hakoshiri, now Amesha! Surely witchcraft was in the air tonight!

"She's had a premonition of something, poor dear," said my wife. "And yet she seems wonderfully quiet about it. Hadn't you better call Mr. Armitage? He'll tell her that nothing ever happens here. It's getting on my nerves."

My wife has much more poise and common sense than her husband; but she was manifestly discomposed. And there stood Amesha, the embodiment of sweet and fragrant health, upborne, one must suppose, by religious faith under the forebodings of disaster. But

what disaster? Besides, no one knew she was here.

However, that was not my affair; she wanted Armitage, and I called him.

Armitage came at once, sliding through the gloom with his long Egyptian step and air of childlike simplicity combined with a certain self-possession. He stood looking down at her benignantly and half-amusedly.

"Well, *bachari*, what is it?"

Amesha stepped toward him and laid her free hand very gently on his arm. She spoke fluently and earnestly, with intonations like the ebb and flow of an Aeolian harp; but the conversation was in Hindustanee, which I do not understand. Armitage listened closely, but with an expression of cheerful composure, interposing a few interrogatives now and then. When she had finished, he uttered a few sentences in a measured, confident tone, ending with a smile.

She held her eyes steadily on his for a moment—a deep look. She sighed, her bosom rising with the long breath. Then she took his hand in hers and laid it reverently on her forehead and breast, and afterwards on the child's. As she was stepping back, Armitage raised both his hands over her head and said in English: "The Lord bless you and the little one, and give you peace! Go now and sleep; we are in His hands."

Her faint smile shone out again; she bowed herself under the benediction and receded into the darkness, pressing her cheek against the little one's silently; it was like the vanishing of a spirit.

There was an interval before even my wife, who has no nonsense about her, was able to speak. She said:

"Has anything made her uneasy, Mr. Armitage?"

Armitage, I fancied, looked graver than he had allowed himself to appear while conversing with Amesha.

"These people have sensibilities incomprehensible to us," was his reply. "Some thought of the mysteries of God's Providence—that life is uncertain, you know—became particularly

real to her. I'm sorry she disturbed you."

"Oh, not in the least," rejoined my wife, relapsing upon her cushions. "If only she's comfortable; she's a perfectly lovely creature!"

Armitage and I found Jebb smoking another cheroot. He was in a humorously imaginative vein.

"You were right," he said to me; "it really is like India. I almost fancied I caught the smell of the bazaar! There was a string of camels passing yonder just now; and if it were a bit lighter, I believe that clump of trees would turn out to be palms!"

At the moment I was not amused; my spirits were heavy. "Had anything disturbed her, really?" I said to Armitage in a low tone.

He answered after a while: "Nothing—on this plane of existence. But many things are more real to her than this world. Do you fellows want to turn in?" he added.

"Not I—I've lit a lamp to outburn Canopus," said Jebb.

"I should be afraid to go to bed, even if there were any chance of sleeping when I got there," I confessed. In fact, I felt as I used to do on declamation day at school, while awaiting my turn to be summoned to recite "The Seminole's Reply," or Daniel Webster's "Speech on the Union." "If this weather keeps on," I continued, as one whistles to keep up his courage, "I shall get Squarey, the carpenter, to fit us out with a set of punkahs."

"Can one hire *punkawallas* on the East Side?" inquired Jebb.

"The only Hindoo I've seen in town," said I, "was that fellow at the vaudeville." But for some reason, I was sorry immediately afterwards that I had happened to make that allusion.

"It would be jolly to take a dip in the surf tonight," suggested Jebb.

"Fine!" I exclaimed, sitting up. "Hako can have the motor ready in ten minutes." But the next moment I subsided. "It wouldn't do—the house would burn down, or something, as soon as we were off," I added dejectedly. Jebb laughed; Armitage, immersed

in meditation, was not attending to us.

"Tomorrow morning will be better," said Jebb; and then for a long time nobody said anything.

I probably dozed off for a few minutes. When I roused up, all the Japanese lanterns but one had gone out. The light from that was flickering over the pallid blurs that were the faces of my two companions. Were they also asleep—or were they paralyzed by the same horror that had seized on me? I had a sensation of nausea, and it seemed to me that a buzzard from the Towers of Silence had been fluttering his huge, fetid wings just over my head. The silence was a nightmare.

Jebb rose quickly and softly to his feet. I remembered, afterwards, that he did this before the silence had been broken. I saw him put out a hand and lay it on Armitage's shoulder.

"I know," said the latter immediately in a low, dry voice.

Almost in the same moment it came—a long, thin outcry, which gathered volume, deepened and culminated in a sort of hoarse, heavy cough, shaking the air like the escape of steam from an engine pipe. But, amid the dozen different, simultaneous efforts my mind made to account for the thing on natural grounds, I helplessly knew what it was. I had never been a hunter of wild beasts in the Indian jungle, but I had heard their devil's scream in the cages of our civilization.

In those first sickening instants, however, I could not tell where the sound came from. We were all on our feet by this time, staring in one another's faces.

In the lull following the first outcry I imagined I caught the murmur of a low woman's voice, uttering words indistinguishable, but with the intonations of invocation or prayer. It was overborne by a growling yell so outrageous, with such bestial rage snarling through it, that it rent my nerves like a rake through flesh. At the same time I was plunging in the direction of the staircase, following the other two. I think Armitage had said

"Amesha!" but we all knew. Long afterwards I saw in memory what I had passed unheeding at the moment—the face and upthrown arms of my wife, rigid with horror, in the dim passage-way.

The noises yelled in my ears all the breathless way up to the landing, growing louder and fearfuller. A gas jet, turned low, burned at the end of the corridor. The door of Amesha's room was halfway down. As I reached the head of the stairs, Armitage was tearing at the door knob, which came off in his hands, and he staggered back against the wall. Meanwhile Jebb, not knowing that the door opened outward, came with a run and dashed his shoulder against the panel. The structure was massive and did not yield. It had evidently been bolted on the inside.

But what hideous work was doing within the room?

The roarings and maddened snarlings were continuous, and so loud as to overpower our voices. With them were plungings of some enormous thing this way and that, the rasp as of naked claws on the bare floor, savage scramblings and leapings, which shook the house, and, once and again the grinding against the door of a bristling hide, impelled with terrific force that made the stout panels crack. At one moment the thing seemed to pause with its muzzle to the crevice beneath the door, whining and sniffing there like a cat. There was a sort of hellish contagion in it all; perhaps I gave way to some frantic demonstration; I felt the strong hand of Jebb on my arm.

"Steady, old man!" he said close to my ear. "It seems to want to get out—why doesn't it take the window?"

Then I recalled that the window, owing to some precautionary notion of my wife's, was protected by a grating of half-inch steel bars, solidly bolted to the oaken framework. The creature wanted to get out—how had it got in?

"Where's Armitage?" I cried, suddenly aware of his absence.

"He's after an axe, I fancy," Jebb answered. "But we'll be too late, I fear!"

With that there rose before my imagination the scene which probably lay on the other side of the door, and I sickened and shuddered.

"Good—he's back already—Hako with him! Must have met him on the way!"

And there, indeed, was our impassive *samurai*, naked to the waist, the muscles of his arms and torso undulating beneath his silken skin, the light of battle fierce on his features. He was another being than I had ever hitherto known.

Gods of Dai Nippon! How he drove that American axe into the splintering framework of the oaken door!

The blows Hako dealt were well directed as well as powerful. At the third the lock flew from its fastenings.

Armitage sprang forward, narrowly missing getting the fourth blow on the back of his neck. Jebb forcibly dragged him back with his left hand; his right hand was holding something down by his side. The door swung wide open. Jebb stood square in front of the threshold, two paces back from it.

Then I saw—what I saw!

The abominable monster seemed to fill the entire aperture. I saw the insufferable glare of the yellow eyes, the flash of the white fangs beneath the black snarl of the froth-dropping lips, the thick ears laid savagely back on either side the tawny, black-striped front, the whole huge breadth and mass of the maneater's head and shoulders. It crouched for the spring, its great paws drawn back under its white breast, its body, beyond, quivering from right to left in terrible tension. It seemed gigantic, irresistible and fatal.

At the moment of its leap, forearms outspread, claws unsheathed, Jebb quietly raised his right hand, and there followed a sharp explosion and a little puff of smoke. He had aimed between the beast's eyes. I had forgotten that the ex-captain always carried a revolver.

"Ah, very well! You do him up, all right!" cried Hako in a harsh, half-laughing tone, lowering the axe which he had held poised at Jebb's left.

But there was nothing! Nothing but a hot, noisome gust, which swept violently past me and seemed to rush shrieking down the stairway. My eyes reeled in my head; but the monster had vanished, at the touch of the bullet, like the winking out of a soap bubble! Was it of kindred origin with the nameless little beast which had snarled and spit on the floor of Benson's dining room at Malabar Hill?

Yet as, following Armitage, we pitched forward into the room, floor and walls were deeply scored with the marks of claws; and the bars of the window were partly wrenched from the bolts.

When the mind has passed its acme of horror and bewilderment, its tension relaxes, and it takes things quietly and unemotionally.

The gas jet—incongruously, as it struck me—burned untroubled from the fixture in the center of the ceiling. The room, twenty feet square, opened at the right into the smaller bedroom. A few pieces of furniture, broken and crushed, lay like driftwood on the beach up against the walls and in corners.

Right beneath the gas jet sprawled on its back the body of a dead Hindoo. It was clad in a long, black caftan. The long, stiffened fingers of the outstretched hands were hooked, like tiger's claws. His throat was horribly swelled out, and from his open mouth had flowed out much blood, matting his black beard and dribbling down to a clotted pool at the left. The pupils of his distended eyes were rolled up beyond the lids, and the balls were so bloodshot as to look red. The body was that of Dhunni Singh, and I also knew that Dhunni Singh was the fakir at Benson's and the juggler at the vaudeville. But how I knew this is more than I can explain.

In the further left hand corner of the room stood Amesha, with the little one in her arms. Both of them were alive and unhurt. The woman stood in the center of a ring described by a fine gold chain—the same that she was used to wear in many coils about her neck. The

gold cross was on the hither circumference of the ring, pointing outward. The little one's cross was on her bosom.

All these things I saw with one glance as I stepped across the threshold.

Amesha stood motionless as one of the carved figures in the caves of Ellora. Her head was up, and her eyes looked fixedly straight ahead. She took no notice of our entrance; but as Armitage shambled toward her with a tender, pitying outcry she relaxed from head to foot, all at once, like water, and dropped to the floor; he was just in time to catch the little one from her arms as she fell. She had fainted—a thing which Hindoo women very seldom do. The serenity of the child was appalling. She smiled at Armitage as he caught her, gurgled in her little throat and put her hand on his cheek. The powers of hell had been impotent even to frighten her.

"I throw this on dunghill?" said Hako, indicating with his foot the corpse of the Hindoo.

"Don't touch it, please!" exclaimed Jebb; and turning to me: "Beg pardon, old man, but hadn't he better take the motor and fetch a coroner?"

Meanwhile Armitage had gathered up Amesha in his long, sinewy arms, and he kissed her unconscious face—a very awkward kiss, but full of zeal—not at all the conventional kiss of peace authorized by the Church; wherefore it pleased me greatly. It meant much. As he met my eyes, his face was beautiful. Except his mother, I think Amesha was the first and only woman he had ever kissed in his life.

A cool, dry breeze from the northwest was driving down on our veranda as we resumed our chairs an hour later awaiting the coroner. The stars were clear and the temperature was no longer that of the Punjab.

"What," I inquired, "do you suppose the coroner will give as the cause of death?"

"He might try apoplexy," Jebb suggested.

"But," I persisted, "how are we to account for this thing?"

Jebb smiled. "The best way is to pretend it didn't happen. No other explanation," he added, "would be accepted, until that book I bought at Melchior's becomes more widely known than it is now."

I said: "My wife declares she saw nothing; only a hot wind rushed downstairs and almost knocked her down—and she said it smelt like the 'Felidae' house in the Zoo."

Just then my wife joined us. "Amesha and the baby are quietly asleep," she announced.

Armitage, though looking intensely happy, had hitherto been silent. He now got impulsively to his feet and exclaimed: "If it wouldn't wake them up, I should propose that we all sing 'Old Hundred'!"

"Here come Hako and the coroner," said Jebb.



**T**HE teacher asked a question today, ma, and I was the only one who could answer it."

"I am proud of you, my boy. What was the question?"  
"She asked how old you were."



**D**IGGS—I understand that you encourage your son to practise on the cornet.

GRIGGS—Yes. He's only been playing two months, but today I bought the house next door to me for one-half its value.



**P**RUE—Madge seems disappointed that there are no nice young men where she is spending her vacation.

DOLLY—No wonder. She doesn't see how she is going to squeeze through the summer.



**A** NYBODY can play the fool, but he is a rare genius who plays it and receives the applause of the multitude.



**T**O most of us flattery sounds more like the truth than the real article.

# ECHOES FROM THE ELIZABETHAN SONNETEERS

By MABEL BESSEY

**Y**ES, I remember once upon a time  
The skies were blue, the gaudy daydreams rare,  
The hopes of happiness, the fortunes fair  
Made all the world a paradise sublime,  
And Fame's tall ladder free for all to climb.  
Then, naught we turned from, naught we did not dare.  
Now, in our disillusioned hearts, we bear  
The song unsung, the shadow of the rime.  
But you, sweet singer of a world at play,  
Have kept the faith; your feet have faltered not:  
For you, the springtime never will grow old—  
One who can ever cheer us on our way,  
One whose sweet dreaming ne'er shall be forgot,  
For you, the rainbow has not lost its gold.

## II

When dusky night, with its soft jeweled pall,  
Doth shadow darkly every hill and dale—  
Save where the moon, with light so silvery pale,  
Gives sad and chastened radiance to all—  
Sleep-bound and heavy, drowsy at thy call,  
To thy far distant isle of dreams we sail,  
Where, shrouded in thy poppy-scented veil,  
Heirs to thy treasures bountiful we fall,  
Lady of dreams, within whose somber eyes  
The shadow of an Old World sorrow broods,  
Be merciful to those whose souls you keep;  
Lady of dreams, whose spirit ever flies,  
A fickle spirit, changeful in its moods,  
Grant me the blessed boon of dreamless sleep.

## III

Ah, would that there were something else to tell  
Of love—save but the fragrant rose, the light  
Of waning moons, the slumbrous summer night,  
The whispers soft and low, fraught with the spell  
Of old delights, where future pleasures dwell,

The glad new birth of spring, the season bright  
 With beauty, pulsing, radiant in the might  
 That even heaven's tempests may not quell!  
 Only in words of others may I say:  
 "I love you, dear"—and yet why do we care  
 If rhyme and meter fail and words come slow?  
 Love has been ours forever on our way,  
 And we have had our hour passing rare,  
 In measure full, heaped high to overflow.



## THE ROAD TO BALLYCLARY

By HELEN COMBES

**O**H, the road to Ballyclary, it goes dipping, dipping, dipping,  
 Down many a ferny hollow, through many a mossy glen;  
 And a little maid who treads it goes tripping, tripping, tripping;  
 She tripped her way into my heart—I cannot tell you when.  
 Her eyes are gray of Ireland, her cheeks are pink of rose,  
 And the sweetness of her smiling, why, everybody knows.  
 She's a bonny Irish lassie, from her elflocks to her toes,  
 On the road to Ballyclary in the morning.

She passes by my window, when the sun is shining, shining;  
 Sometimes she casts a fleeting glance, sometimes she never looks.  
 She does not know an aching heart is pining, pining, pining,  
 Pent up by bricks and mortar, 'mid the papers and the books.  
 She chats with other lassies, but the men she passes by;  
 She never seems to see them—I often wonder why.  
 Is she waiting for a stranger? Fate send that it be I,  
 On the road to Ballyclary in the morning.

Oh, some fine Sunday morning when the bells are ringing, ringing,  
 And calling all the pious maids to mass with Father Flynn,  
 I'll go to church beside them, where the choir is singing, singing;  
 Then the golden gates of Heaven may ope' to let me in.  
 For I'll speak a word to Nora and tell her how I'm fain  
 To live for her or die for her, but cannot bear the pain;  
 And perhaps the heart she's broken she'll be patching up again  
 On the road to Ballyclary in the morning.



**M**ONEY has a refining influence, but too many of the rich haven't had it long enough.

# AIRSHIPS AND THE SOUL OF MAN

By RICHARD LE GALLIENNE

THE world is now confidently looking forward to the imminent era of the airship, with the eager impatience of a child for its new toy. The toy is almost ready. That it is coming there is now, obviously, no doubt at all. A few more experiments, a few more improvements, and it will be there on sale in the toy shop for anybody to buy, like the latest pattern of automobile.

How wonderful it will be to fly! No doubt it will be a very exciting, even an inspiring and possibly an exquisite experience. Such purely liquid speed will undoubtedly be a new form of ecstasy. It will come very near to disembodied motion—this jarless, subtle gliding through space, this silken rapidity of ethereal passage. Moreover, as an observation car of boundless prospects, the airship will provide the Cook's tourist of the sky with many novel gasps and thrills.

But it is not my purpose here to dilate on what the airship will bring us—to my thinking, comparatively little. That has long been in able and enthusiastic hands; mine the solitary purpose vainly to point out and fruitlessly to lament what it must all too surely take away.

Certain other philosophers have their apprehensions. They dread its military developments; they foresee its criminal adaptability. But, so far as I have seen, no one seems to have realized, or, at all events, minded, that the airship means not the gain, but the irretrievable loss of the sky—the trivial

physical conquest, indeed, but the tragical spiritual loss!

In the few years that remain before aviation is an accomplished commonplace of our lives, man is literally looking his last on the sky. All too soon it will be impossible, even for a rich man, to enjoy the peace which is mine this afternoon, as in the heart of an old wood I lie upon the fern and contemplate the mystery of the boundless sky. Soon that flawless Infinite will be feverishly alive to ear and eye with all the temporal traffic of the world, all the turmoil and vulgarity of any other earthly thoroughfare. Solitude will be utterly and forever destroyed, and wearied town-tired folk, that had been wont to flee into the country to rest their eyes and feed their nerves on tranquil spaces, may as well remain in the city, and will least of all turn their eyes on the sky, which will then be as suggestive of peace as Broadway at noon tide.

There have been many outcries, from Ruskin on, against the vandalism of modern machinery. Such have seemed to me mainly sentimental, for the damage done to nature here and there by railway or power house has been purely local or infinitesimal, by comparison with its boundless beauty. If here or there a railroad mars the landscape or a power house depletes a waterfall, the world is inexhaustibly supplied with landscapes and picturesque rivers.

All such forms of mechanical speed are lost to sight and sound in the great

tree-clad silence of the earth. Even the vulgarest automobile party, breaking the country stillness, makes but a momentary intrusion and is gone with a turn in the road. The ugliest line of freight cars is swallowed up in some umbrageous woodland. All such vehicular necessities—and nuisances—make but comparatively insignificant currents and ripples upon the face of nature; but from the airship, it is easy to see, there will be no possibility of escape, no cessation of its visible intrusion everywhere and at all times on the tormented eyesight of man.

It will strike the greatest blow to beauty, in the deepest as well as the surface meaning of the word, that has ever been struck on this planet. The persecutions of beauty have been many, but they have been in their nature spasmodic, passing historic manifestations of vandalism or eclipses of the human spirit; but here is a hostile new condition of things, organic in nature itself, literally as all-embracing as the sky, from which there is no escape.

This is not a jeremiad merely in the interest of artists or poetical persons, yet it would be idle to deny what a calamity the airship will be to the painter. No one will ever be able to paint again the solemn glory of the sunset or the enchanted loneliness of the morning sky. Athwart the delicate heavens will come a grimy train of Standard Oil freight ships, or some noisy supper party will go by, blowing horns and singing music hall ditties. Indeed, pictures of the sky before the day of airships will become rare and curious things, to be looked on with wonder, and enterprising painters might do worse than lay in a stock of pictures against the evil day. They will surely be of great value in the course of a very few years.

Of course, it is easy to see that the airship will have its own pictorial possibilities, too, possibilities which no doubt will result in some delightfully bizarre art, as the barges and warehouses of the Thames turned to favor and to prettiness under the magic of Whistler; but such whimsical sectional

art will hardly compensate us for the loss of the more central cosmic art of the sky, hardly console us for the loss of the silver mystery of the rising moon.

No, night and day, the sky will be a sky no longer, but one vast and vulgar sky sign, which, instead of calming, will reflect and immeasurably increase the fever and fret of humanity.

All outdoor privacy will cease, for the most secluded woodland, the most untrdden wilderness, will be open to invasion at any moment. Gardens will lose half their charm. We shall have to roof them in. Noble parks will cease to be desirable possessions. Mountains will be the least solitary of all places—and in those days, indeed, no one will dream of going up into a mountain to pray. For all such meditative purposes man will have to descend into the bowels of the earth; and fantastic excavation—life à la Monte Cristo—will no doubt become the fashion for rich persons. Underground pleasure gardens, after the manner of the Arabian Nights, will be one of the refuges of persecuted man. For we shall all be at the mercy of the vulgar hoodlumism of the world to an extent we can hardly conceive of now. At present we can escape from the vulgar impertinent or the moneyed roisterer, but then there will be no refuge except indoors or underground. The spectacle of vulgar wealth in all its vociferous parade will be ever before us, and money will become literally the prince of the powers of the air.

Whatever gains there may be to man in aviation—and the gains are obvious; I have already hinted at them—they cannot, it seems to me, compensate him for the tragic, irretrievable spiritual loss which will ensue from his achievement at last of the old disastrous ambition of Icarus.

The airship will give us greater rapidity of transportation, greater facilities for diabolic warfare and a new speed excitement for nerves that live on speed. Undeniably it will be a wonderful new exhilaration—for a short while—to a jaded, feverish world. But

when the novelty has died down and to circle round the Flatiron Building is no longer more exciting than spinning a top or rolling a hoop, I think that man, with a great and vain regret, will awaken to what he has lost by his wonderful new toy.

All the old peace and prayer of the world will have gone. The air, once so pure and tranquil, will be filled with the sound of gongs, the flash of signals and undreamed-of forms of noise and colors. Man will have placed a cloud of gigantic gnats between him and the Infinite; and howsoever high he may ascend in the swiftest airship, never will he find again the same sky that blessed him with its blue peace, its beautiful old dreams of better worlds and fantastic fairy isles and seas, and laid the consoling hand of the Eternal upon his troubled human heart. For him the moon no more shall rise among the quiet trees, and the morning star will be surrounded by—excursionists. All such ancient inspirations and consolations of man will be gone. Where will be now the sweet influences of the Pleiades? And no more even may he lie down in the green pastures or walk beside the still waters. He will have lost both heaven and earth. He will, so to speak, have come astronomically nearer to the stars—as though he had been pushed up a little nearer, through a telescope—but astronomy is not the stars. He will have become acquainted with awful azure gulfs of space, millions of miles of nothing, with dizzy heights of boundless but somewhat similar ether; but he will have lost what I might call a certain old familiarity betwixt sky and earth, which makes the sun seem nearer and closer to us, as it opens the eyes of the flowers and sets the birds singing and fills the woodland with ascending spices and tans us in long, happy, summer days, and then sets, with such mysterious promise of

immortal glory to mortal hearts, behind the widowed world.

The naked sun and the naked moon are tiresome heavenly bodies. They owe their real attraction for us to the earth, which clothes their beams in various raiment of morning mist and romantic cloud—the pomp and luxury and tenderness of clouds! The airy veils of rainbowed vapors! Or they must alternately hide and reveal and diffuse themselves through the secrerries of ancient trees. Heaven, and even the heavens, are largely a creation of earth. I am much afraid the airship is going to lose us both.

But of course all this will sound old-fashioned to the pathetic speed fiends of the modern world, the nervous children of an overstrung and murderously driven civilization, whose illusion is that to go fast is to go far. These, and such speed fiends of so-called modern progress, are losing and destroying much for us of “the old perfections of the earth”—to quote a beautiful phrase of Lord De Tabley, and they are giving us nothing but the dust and ashes of excitement in exchange.

They have already lost us the real Japan; some day they may even lose us the real England—homes of ancient beauty, ancient strength and ancient distinction. Odd as it may sound, electricity is no substitute for religion and those beautiful old forms of piety that tend the altar and tend the sick and tend the flowers alike, with a sense that this strange old world is a very sacred place, and mysteriously in the hands of God.

Now these speed fiends of civilization are about to rob us of the sky. They are about to commercialize, belligerize and even vulgarize the sky. We can but hope that the eternal compensatory law of things will make some amends to the soul of man for this tragic loss.



# G O S S I P

By G. VERE TYLER

**G**OSSIP is disguised jealousy.

Women gossip as hens pick the earth—it kills time, and they might hit on something savory.

Women gossip about women, but in reality man is the subject.

When women gossip, invisible men line up along the walls. They are appealing to these invisible men.

Women gossip about clothes because clothes are their weapons to shoot men.

All women contain the poison of passion—gossip lets it out.

Gossip is like a swarm of fireflies; they fly about lighting up things, but have no power to sting.

No woman takes another woman's gossip concerning a third woman seriously. She knows if the third woman enters the door she will be cordially greeted.

A gossiping woman becomes temporarily eulogistic of all women when she has secured her man; then all the other women gossip about her.

Gossip is like let-off steam; it effects nothing but prevents much.



**S**O he said I was a polished gentleman, did he?"

"Well, yes, it was the same thing, I suppose."

"Ah! What were the exact words?"

"He said you were a slippery fellow."



**A**S soon as a man feels that he can read a woman like a book she turns over the page.



**B**EAUTY is only purse deep.

# THE DESIRE OF THE MOTH

By KATHARINE METCALF ROOF

SEEKING for an explanation of Eric Sanford's artistic development, the speculative mind was moved to inquire if it were not a case where the course of art had run too smoothly. Eric had been a *wunderkind*, and there had been no opposition—as is supposedly the case with authentic genius—to his chosen career. His father was an artist of professional but uninspired achievement, one of the undistinguished majority. Genius, which seems often an inexplicable spontaneous growth, will in other cases seem to be an ultimate result. So Eric's father, recognizing that he glimpsed more than he was able to formulate, came to regard himself as a necessary step in that evolution of expression of which Eric was the perfect flower. The realization of his boy's talent brought him his deepest happiness. All sense of his own modest achievement became lost in visions of Eric's future as it began to assume not only certainty but the vista of an unlimited perspective. In the mother's consciousness the mysticism of motherhood inclosed also a sacred realization of privilege. She believed herself to be the mother of a genius—a gift so few women, alas, have consciously possessed.

In this harmonious atmosphere it is conceivable that the talent might have wasted from lack of that muscle developed by the wrestle with adverse circumstances—for this fight which, if prolonged beyond a certain point, may stifle the gleam, seems essential to the infusion of that sense of life which must exist in art. The gleam, however, did not die. Eric's art developed on the

technical side precociously, brilliantly. The instructors of the art school predicted or failed to predict for the very largeness of the prospect. Eric was likely to do anything, they said. At any time this manifestation was likely to occur. Yet the thing that happened was the last that had been expected. Eric mysteriously stood still. Apparently some essential element was lacking. It was not that quality known to the sentimental outsider as "soul"; it was an indescribable something in the work itself. His finished picture never accomplished what his sketch promised—not an uncommon occurrence with the artist who is less than a master—but in Eric's case the missing element was not the lack of technical facility or of art perception which usually lies back of such failure. As time went on and Eric did not pass beyond the point that he had prematurely reached several years before, and students with less than half his talent were being talked about, people began to speculate. Some of the "boys" who had been his colleagues at the art school went so far as to say that Eric had not "made good." The critics began to say that he had not found himself. Some of the masters who had assisted to such extent as was necessary his swift ascent up the steep path of technical achievement were beginning to say that he had not fulfilled his promise. Others retained an unshaken belief in him. His mother remained serenely confident, but his father worried over the problem.

"There is some little obstruction or some combining medium that is lacking; that is all," Langley said, and

Langley was very wise. "When he stumbles upon that—for it is something that has to happen, not anything Eric can do for himself—you will see."

The art student to whom Langley chanced to address this remark—for Langley expressed himself without regard to the receptivity of the listening ear—looked pensive and suggested that perhaps he "needed to suffer." Langley smiled. "Or fall in love—that is what you are thinking." The art student with a far-away musing look in her eyes then inquired if the two were not synonymous. Declining to dally with the sentimentally epigrammatic, Langley replied that the much discussed effect of falling in love upon art was problematic, inasmuch as its effects were quite as likely to be destructive as constructive, and left the art student dreamily contemplative of Eric's future—which in the nature of things must prove exciting to the susceptible feminine imagination.

As for Eric himself, he apparently did not speculate. He was serene, like his mother. A beautiful boy—at thirty still a boy—he seemed not very sensibly alive to woman except as painting material. Attempts to interest him somehow slid ineffectually from his smooth surface. He seemed indeed, as the pensive art student observed, to have his "heart in his work." Perhaps he knew that something within him was dumb or at least had not yet spoken. But if he groped in his art expression, it was with no sense of bewilderment or strain. He obviously felt no warring forces within him. He seemed not to possess that uneasy thing known as temperament. He was contented and happy, thought a great deal about his art in concrete terms of form and pigment, and very little about himself. He apparently had no sense of waiting for the miracle. He had spent several summers abroad painting and studying the galleries. He had modeled some, too. Langley had said once that he sometimes wondered if Eric were not working in the wrong medium, if perhaps he ought not to be a sculptor, in spite of the fact that his

color sense was so pronounced. Eric himself wondered about that from time to time still. Then the turning point came, accidentally, as Langley had foreseen, turning upon the chance of an accepted invitation. Dearing, whose studio was across the hall from Eric's, had persuaded him to go with him to see a new venture in the field of art—a pantomime with some interesting modern music of an Oriental character. By Oriental, Dearing explained, he meant almost Chinese. It was a curious exotic performance, and the girl, he said, was wonderful.

"The girl?" Eric questioned. They were already on their way.

"The dancer. She is quite—indescribable. She was born in the English colony in North Africa, she tells me, and English is her native tongue, but she has a perceptible touch of accent. I shouldn't wonder if she had Arab blood. She might be anything. Anyway, she will interest you."

Eric was ready to be interested. It was his characteristic attitude. Perhaps that was the reason his interest had never become special; he was so susceptible to the general appeal of things, so open to all impressions.

Dearing had not exaggerated. Eric went home with the sense of having discovered a new thing. It was like having seen the shores of a new country. What was it, put into words—a fantastic story set to fantastic music conveyed with such art that it seemed speech would have been an intrusion. The girl had the genius of motion. The little performance had nothing in common with the crude mechanical gestures of the French ballet pantomime. Was it her dancing, a *walpurgisnacht* fantasy of elfin revels? Was it the girl herself? Not in the usual sense. Yet he thought about her, defined her. She was the last word of art and she was cosmic, a creature of the elements, as if the wind were made visible. She was an etherealization of the human, a generalization of the lure of a woman's body. She had no tangible suggestion of the flesh. It was a woman, so to speak, with the texture of an elf. In

any case, she was the breath of life blown upon the sleeping spirit of his art. She had filled his mind with images, gleams, suggestions. The miracle had happened.

He did not go home afterwards, but to his studio. That would not alarm his mother; it was his occasional habit. He picked up a pencil. One pose after another rose before him. He sketched quickly, surely, indicating them one after the other, but he was not satisfied. He pushed them away, studied them and paused. His eye wandering about the room fell upon a Tanagra figure. If he could imprison but one of those inexpressible dance movements of her incredibly light body, it would be the most wonderful dancing figure ever modeled. He rose and hunted for a lump of modeling wax. When he found it he began to fashion it swiftly upon a light piece of tubing. He did not work long. When the inexplicable moment came that he dropped his hands and pushed back his work, he knew that it was finished. He did not know yet that it was the best thing he had done. He only felt satisfied that he had caught the thing that had haunted his memory—the upraised arm holding the clinging light skirt, the slant and slip of the body, the rhythmic balance. He covered it with a cloth and lay down upon his divan and fell into a dreamless sleep. He had never given a thought to the woman. He had not at that time a single personal speculation about her.

The instant of waking he was wide awake. He rose and went over to his work of the night before, and for a moment was afraid to lift the cloth. But when he had lifted it his heart leaped. It was there, the beautiful thing he had seen. He had caught it, caught more than an inspired arrestment of her subtle motion. It was the very spirit of the dance.

The miracle had happened. He knew it now. He went about consciously seeing the world with new eyes, contemptuous of his old unawakened self as a butterfly might scorn its chrysalis. When evening came

he went naturally enough to see the girl again. And as one whose eyes are opened to a new color, a new secret of tone, he saw further and more. Suggestions more defined, more subtle, came to him, but when he went home he did not attempt to reproduce; he thought deeply instead. The next night he did not go to the theater, but very soon he went again. That time the bill had changed; it was the story of a wood nymph, an Ariel-like part. He went home again overwhelmed with the stimulation of his creative impulse. He was so absent-minded now that people had to speak twice to him before he heard.

"Is the boy in love?" his father wondered, but his mother shook her head. "It is his work."

Yet in an etherealized sort of way the normal human thing had begun to take place within him. That is to say, she was always with him—images of her indefinable movement, visible music he called it, her strange little face. It was not like any face he had ever seen. It was even more full of suggestions than her body. It reflected lights and colors like a thing in nature. There was nothing fixed about it, yet it took on at certain moments a strange Oriental immobility.

One day Dearing, who had discovered with much excitement the wax figure in Eric's studio, dropped in and made a proposition to him: "Want to meet her?"

Eric looked up. "Why, do you know her?"

Dearing nodded. "I'm going there this afternoon. Come along if you care to."

Eric considered. "I don't know. I'd never thought of that."

Dearing stared. "And you go there almost every night! The ticket man has you down as one of the incurables."

Eric's face was that of one assimilating a new thought. "I suppose a lot of chaps are in love with her."

Dearing smiled. "A few."

An odd impersonal sense of possession protested in Eric. "They can't see her."

Dearing studied him curiously. "They don't see what you see, of course. Well, are you coming? You will find her interesting to talk to."

"To talk to!" Eric echoed. "Why, I never thought of it before; I have never heard her voice."

## II

He wondered afterwards if the sense of readjustment had not centered in her voice. It was not that it was not beautiful, for it was, with an individual quality that lingered in the memory. Was it that he felt it as too definite? Speech, words, he reflected, were in their nature more definite than motion and music, and it was in these impalpable terms that he had imaged her.

"I want to see the modern Tanagra," she said to him in the few minutes' conversation they had together as he was leaving.

He had assented commonplacely. His surprise at her knowledge of the thing, the confusion of his readjustment, while it did not actually embarrass him, rendered him more or less inarticulate. He had said nothing, he reflected afterwards, that a dry goods clerk might not have said in the circumstances. Yet there was no disappointment in the inscrutable eyes that rested upon him. Little overtones of thought seemed to hover about her eyelids, but her mouth had the reserve of the Orient. Dearing was right—she suggested the East.

The touch of her hand at parting gave accent and tangibility to his impression of her. It was a hand that one would remember. But the impression was too tangible already. That was the trouble. Well, what had he expected? This was not a world of elves and nixies. Just what was this difference that he felt—for really she did not have less beauty deprived of the effects of the theater. The dark little face was of a less ethereal coloring than the theater make-up implied, but it was not less interesting on that account—rather more so when one had become

adjusted to the difference. Was it perhaps the mere removal from the atmosphere of illusion, the inevitable explicitness of a meeting in the flesh? He went away wondering. The result was that the next time Dearing went to see her Eric went with him, and this time it was different. He talked with her with such a sense of communication as he had never known with any human being. She, too, in her way was a *wunderkind*, for she was still young. She seemed to possess art as others possess information. All manifestations of it were familiar to her, acquired apparently by some mysterious effortless process. Yet he talked to her with his mind only. His emotions were as cool as if he were reading an essay. Only once at some small amusing occurrence her laughter overflowed into an indescribable expression of light and emotion. That submerged elfin self rose, as it were, to the surface iridescent, dazzling. His imagination took fire. He went away stirred and restless.

That evening he went to see her in the theater. In this second role there was a touch of pathos, the tragedy of the fairy that loved a mortal. It dated from that evening that he began to be tormented by the human sense of her, the common emotional experience subtilized, refined, exaggerated as it can come to an artist. He was mad to capture, not the tangible woman, but the thing that she was. He went now every night to see her at the theater. He went frequently to her house at such time as she received visitors. Sometimes he saw her alone. Self-unconscious, as the processes of man are likely to be, he did not realize that what he was really struggling for was the reconciling of her two selves—the elusive creature of mists and dreams so intoxicating to the imagination, the problematic and far from simple personality of the girl herself. For that provocative fictitious self would rise from time to time clothing her in its potent illusion. Again it would sink below the surface and no discoverable means could call it into being. Its

comings and going were not calculable. At other times she would seem to him as unmagnetic and unresponsive as stone. She was more interesting to talk to, he decided, than any woman he had ever known, but there was some obstruction or perhaps something about them, psychically, that would not mix.

One day, as he sat talking with her, he came to realize two things. In her presence he was quite cold. While he had only touched in the formality of greeting and parting her hand so exquisitely expressive in her art, he had not desired more. Yet when he contemplated that other self separated by the barrier of the footlights, his passion would have consumed her, a mysterious illusive passion immaterial, unquenchable—"the desire of the moth for the star." Then came the second and more significant realization: he had not worked since he had known her.

When he rose to go he said: "I am not coming to see you any more."

She exhibited neither surprise nor regret. "But you must let me see the little figure before the edict goes into effect," was her only comment. And they settled upon a day then and there.

He remembered afterwards, as he did everything about her, her light movement as she went up to the dancing figure, "Is this me?" she had asked in a childish way she sometimes had. Then after her silent scrutiny the artist in her spoke. "It is more than a portrait of me. It is an idea."

"It is one of the hidden laws of the universe," Eric responded, "embodied in one small person. But it is only a hint. Some day I shall lay bare the secret."

She gave him a look. "While you are staying away from me."

He nodded acquiescence, scarcely surprised at her divination. "You will show it to me, of course," she added.

He nodded again. "Of course. For you are giving it to me. You know that, don't you?"

She seemed to reflect, faintly smiling. "When I see it I shall understand," she said at length.

"Understand what?"

She put out her hand disregarding his question. "Are you going to stay away from the theater, too?"

"No, not from the theater—at least, not yet."

She smiled her cryptic smile that seemed to contain innumerable shifting images of the East. "Good-bye then, until it is finished."

### III

THE thing worked as he had half consciously divined. In a little while he began to work again, and it happened curiously that after his second or third visit to the theater the perception of her actual self in the fictitious one slipped from him and he saw her almost as he had first glimpsed her, as an abstraction, a suggestion. He began to work and started a dozen different things. They all had the stamp of his awakened genius. Each, however slight, was a little masterpiece. The creative force was intensely alive in him now. Then one day the great idea came like a flash of light and he worked steadily, absorbedly, without hesitation or alteration. It was as if the thing lay under his hand and he were only uncovering it. When that mysterious sense came of the moment to stop he covered the clay and for several days did not even look at it. But when he finally ventured to lift the cloth he saw that his idea was "out." The time had come, then, to keep his promise to her, so he sent her a note, telling her to set her own hour for coming to see it.

"The eleventh hour," she said as she gave him her hand in greeting. "I sail tomorrow."

He expressed his regret in formal phrases. Dominated by his absorption in his work, he realized her remotely at first, as one is conscious of the presence of the indifferent person. But when they stood side by side before the veiled figure he felt her in one concentrated moment as one who has come to mean everything to him. It was as if the final decision of himself hung in the balance and the judgment she pro-

nounced was to be mysteriously final.

"I am not going to explain my idea," he said unsteadily. "You must tell me if I have said it." Then he lifted the cloth without daring to look at her until she spoke.

"It is the original force—that is the feeling it gives me—the origin of motion, the rhythm of life, the thing that is back of music, poetry, all art—life. It is only one figure, but somehow it is all that."

It was some time before he could speak, the relaxation of the tension was so great. "You could not have inspired it and not have understood," he said at last in a low voice that shook a little. "It is yours, you see, as well as mine, as I told you."

She looked at the figure, not at him, and smiled. "No, it is not in any sense mine. But it has something in it that might have been mine." He looked at her quickly, but she did not turn to meet his eyes. "If you had loved me you could not have done it."

"That is true," he said slowly.

"When you were seeing me you could not work."

He started. "How did you know?"

She smiled, turning a little from him with one of her indescribable movements. "I knew." She touched the clay figure lightly. "And so the thing that might have been mine has gone into this."

He stared at her; the ineffable thing that illumined her when she danced and moved behind the footlights quivered illusively about her, stirring him. He took a step nearer to her. "Would you have wanted it?"

Her eyes met his an unrevealing instant, then returned to his work. She still smiled. "I don't know."

His eyes followed hers and remained upon his figure. "You have done a bigger thing to me." She did not answer. "The thing you have made live in me is the most tremendous thing in the world."

Her smile seemed to accumulate mysteries. "And what is that?"

"The miracle of the creative impulse."

She balanced the thought lightly, yet not trivially. "And is that the greatest thing in the world?"

"Isn't it?"

She seemed to consider, then shook her head. "I don't know."

Then she looked up with a smile suddenly vivid, the inconsequent smile of a child, yet somehow omniscient. She indicated indescribably, his masterpiece. "It will last longer."

"It is a sort of union," he reflected slowly. He had not thought it out before. "And this is the result." He turned and looked down at her, and the vanishing glimmer of her smile haunted him for days with conjectures as to its meaning. The smile of the Sphinx, a being who knew things he could not know and could explain things he could not understand. He groped about half undivining male being, half mystical artist. "I don't think we could have loved each other anyway. There was some obstruction. I felt it when I was with you. I fancied you felt it, too."

She definitely dropped the curtain of her eyelids. "I wonder what it was?" she said.



**H**E—Is there anything between them?  
SHE—Only his wife.



**A** NEIGHBOR is a person of whom we may borrow. A nuisance is a person who borrows of us.

# THE TURNING OF THE WORMS

By CAPTAIN LESLIE T. PEACOCKE

"**W**HAT on earth *do* men marry for?" queried Bertie Boileau, carefully folding two slices of thin bread and butter, his handsome bronzed face quizzically puzzled.

"Wives," replied Clara Pauncefote laconically, extending her foot to the ground and setting her hammock once more in motion.

"I know," said Bertie, his mouth full. "But apart from assisting to emancipate the sex, what do the beggars get out of it?"

"Don't be horrid, Bertie," she said, stopping the hammock with a jerk. "I know you don't intend to be rude, but your tone is almost personal."

"I beg your pardon," he said hastily. "I didn't mean—er—I—"

"Oh, don't apologize," she broke in testily. "Don't make it worse. You know why men marry. Because they fall in love; and you wouldn't ask a question like that, or have to ask it, if other men had a proper sense of honor—if they weren't beasts."

"Oh, Clara!" cried the subaltern, flushing, despite the tan.

"Yes, that hit you," said the major's wife, her pretty dimpled mouth for once snapping severely. "But it won't do you any good. You are one of those men—irresponsible boys, rather—who know how to make love without the least bit of respect in your heart for any woman except those of the utterly bad variety, who are devoid of sentiment, and who know you at your true value."

"My dear Clara," cried Bertie, aghast, "what do you mean?"

"What I can say, now that my eyes are opened," she returned, sitting up in

the hammock and facing him squarely. "I meant to have it out with you today, Bertie, and to make you understand once and for all that *everything*—and that means friendship even—is over between us."

"Why, Clara!" gasped the subaltern, amazed.

"Not Clara, please," she said sternly—"Mrs. Pauncefote. That is the name I am known by in society, and my husband's friends in the regiment call me 'Mrs. Fatty.' It's not a pretty name," she continued, "but it is only made use of by men who like and respect me and who never sneer at my husband. 'Fatty Pauncefote' they call him, but love and respect him in the calling. Nicknames in our regiment are not given unkindly."

"I know that," said Bertie, placing his empty tea cup on the veranda table and feeling and looking awkwardly ill at ease; "but surely, Clara, I—"

"Mrs. Pauncefote," she corrected. "Please. Yes, I know you have a nickname too—'Curly Bertie'; and given—why? Because you have curly hair and are what my husband calls 'a pretty boy'!"

"Rot!" said Bertie, nettled.

"You know why the regiment gave it to you, I suppose," she continued; "and perhaps they didn't mean it unkindly. Most men would resent it, I think. My husband would."

"What on—on earth is the meaning of this change?" said Bertie hotly, resenting the unaccustomed tones from the lady to whom his gradually wanng interest had caused many sleepless nights and recriminations. "Is it—er—is it because I— Oh, well one, has to

do the decent thing at one's own regimental dance, and er—Mrs. Howard—"

"How dare you!" she cried, springing to her feet. "How dare you sit there and accuse me of jealousy, like some horrid French woman or—or—" she stammered, seeking a parallel, "like Mrs. Trent, who made such a fuss when you first threw your captivating curly head at me? 'Baby Trent!' Have you seen her lately?"

"N—no," stammered Boileau uneasily.

"Well, I have," returned Mrs. Pauncefote, enjoying his discomfiture. "This morning; and we discussed you."

He made a wry face, but no words accompanied the facial expression.

"Yes," she continued, "we had a long chat. I suppose you know she has been very ill?"

Percy bit his lip. "I—er—heard something about it," he admitted.

"Yes, she told me you had left a card. She seemed grateful for even that. Bertie, do you know, you're a beast, an unfeeling beast!"

"Oh, I say!" he objected, the calmness of her gaze disconcerting him rather than her speech. Tears and recriminations he was accustomed to—he understood; but calmness disquieted him. He had always made it a point to bestow his favors only on women who had everything to lose. It was safer; and though he had experienced tears and upbraidings at their hands, he had perforce put up with that. It was a part of the game, the climax, and was to be expected.

The find, the chase, the surrender, or the anticlimax as he considered it, were his—the legitimate sport of subalterns he argued; and he had brought it to a science.

He was a sportsman to his finger tips, and never did he don a new uniform or suit of mufti or yet experience a haircut without an ulterior thought of the probable effect on the ever present or already scented chase. Unmarried girls he left religiously alone. Marriage might some day be convenient and was always in the offing, and nurseries he abhorred. Widows were not for such

true sportsmen as he. He was no pot-hunter, nor did he enjoy the chase without the spice of danger, but the danger he ever faced was at no times great. The wrath of an outraged husband was always to be expected, if aroused, but the usual caution displayed by the wife with a social reputation at stake greatly minimized the danger, and was as nothing compared to the unrelenting machinations of a tenacious widow.

Both morally and physically he was a coward, as are all men of his caliber, and needless to say, he was absolutely without heart. While devoting the greater part of his time and thoughts to the fair sex, yet matrimonial pitfalls he had ever shunned, his allowance from his father and his pay in the Roxshire Fusiliers being amply sufficient to preclude the necessity of turning a pleasurable business into an irksome luxury.

And his conscience never pricked him. He was a child of circumstance, he argued, and if other men, more short-sighted than he, chose to bring their wives to India, where intrigue and flirtation were in the very air one breathed, was he to blame, or was it incumbent on him to establish a code of morality directly opposed to time-honored precedent as part and parcel of Indian military life, and to which his shallow, selfish nature responded with ever ready willingness? What mattered it to him whether it was his own brother officer that he wronged, a man beside whom he sat at mess and from whom he daily took military commands? Was not every man supposed to be capable of holding his wife's love and respect? And if a man chose to place his honor in an unworthy casket, was he to be blamed for a gift of foresight in quickly ascertaining the fact and forestalling, where possible, all others of equally moral irresponsibility?

"Yes," repeated Clara Pauncefote, critically surveying him from his curly head downward, letting her eyes rest disconcertingly on his immaculately white tennis shoes. "An unfeeling beast! I had a good long think over everything last night, and paid you the

compliment of crying my eyes out. I suffered—I am suffering now, as is every woman who has ever had anything to do with you and men of your stamp, but the good long think and the tears did me good. I didn't go to sleep; I couldn't. Before it was daylight I had quite made up my mind to the only course open to a woman who is heartily ashamed of herself and anxious to make atonement."

"I see," said Boileau dubiously.

"And then I called on Mrs. Trent."

"What for?" he queried, his anxiety momentarily deepening.

"To ask her advice," she returned, with the calmness begotten of great mental suffering and a mind now thoroughly made up. "To consult her about you and to consider what was the best thing to do."

"I'm awfully obliged," he muttered, his face a study.

"I found her rather difficult at first," she went on, ignoring his remark, "but I quite expected that, of course, and the poor little woman looked dreadfully ill; but before I left her we had both made up our minds about Mrs. Howard."

"Look here!" he exclaimed, now thoroughly heated. "I don't see what right you have to—"

"No?" she interrupted, her eyebrows raised in questioning astonishment. "Well, now I come to look at you closely, I don't suppose you do. Well, Mr. Boileau, Mrs. Trent and I have satisfied ourselves, without considering your feelings in the matter; we don't care about them in the least; and we have come to the conclusion that you have gone far enough."

"Indeed!" he retorted, his face distorted with a sneer.

"Too far," she continued, her beautiful face strangely stern for one so young and erstwhile all dimpled sunshine. "Now I am not seeking to excuse myself. I was as much to blame as you. I have a husband whom I love. You needn't laugh—I do; I know it now. Comparisons are odious, and in this case ridiculous. Fatty Pauncefote—that's what they call him—Fatty

Pauncefote! And he is fat; but it's good fat. Every ounce of him is good, through and through. And you—oh, Bertie Boileau, do you realize what you are?"

"Oh, pshaw!" he interjected impatiently, seeking retreat.

"No, no," she said hastily, "you mustn't go yet. You'll be very sorry if you do. You *must* listen to what I decided with Mrs. Trent."

That stopped him, and she knew that he would now listen to the end, foreseeing his frenzied amazement when all was told.

"What you are I won't trouble to tell you. You would never understand; but some women understand—how many I don't know. You have probably kept count, and Mrs. Trent and I are among the number. We talked it all over, she and I, and we have quite made up our minds that we are the last, the very last."

"Well, really, I—" he began, attempting a defense.

"Yes, really," she echoed, angry at his bleating attempt. "There will be no more—no Mabel Howard, no anyone. No, don't interrupt; you can just listen, and then you can go."

She paused as the soft-footed *kit-muigar* entered the veranda to remove the tea tray, keeping her eyes with a half-amused and wholly pained expression on her erstwhile lover until the native butler noiselessly withdrew, closing the door discreetly behind him.

"To come to the point," she resumed, taking a telegram from her pocket: "I received this last night." She passed it to him across the table and closely watched his expression as he read it.

"You see," she continued, "my husband says that he and Captain Trent return this evening."

"Yes," he said, uneasily attentive. "Well?"

"George has been away four months," she continued reminiscently, "and Captain Trent six, doing their duty to their country by fighting the Dacoits up in Burmah. They left their wives behind them here in Bangalore, with every

comfort and luxury to console them for their absence, and trusting them as implicitly as men of their stamp always do. We have both betrayed that trust, Mr. Boileau, as women will who are brought in contact with you. You have absolutely no sense of honor where women are concerned, and every woman in this station knows it. You may not be all to blame, being what you are, and if women give encouragement to men like you they must know what to expect.

"I encouraged you—I don't deny it; and so did Mrs. Trent, and nearly broke her heart when you transferred your so-called affections to me. Mrs. Howard has now smiled on you and her husband has been ordered to take a draft to Quetta. That means an absence of six months and leaves the coast clear for you."

"This is awful rot," Boileau burst in, the perspiration streaming down his face, the Indian autumn heat being not wholly responsible.

"Most unpleasant things are," she continued calmly as before. "Now Mabel Howard is only a girl—just twenty, I believe—and has been married only six months. Major Howard is quite a good deal older than she is, but he is a man of whom any girl ought to be proud, and no unhappiness is going to be caused to him or to her through you."

"I don't see what b—business—" he stuttered, now thoroughly nettled.

"No, but you will," she snapped curtly. "Just wait. You most probably think that I am actuated by jealousy, but if so you are wrong. I am thoroughly disillusioned, that's all; and though you may think ever so lightly of women, as you do, you must remember, as you will now have cause to remember in fact, that worms will turn. That is what we called ourselves this morning, Mrs. Trent and I—worms; but we both agreed that when worms do turn they generally cause a slight upheaval."

"Very slight," he broke in sarcastically.

"No doubt," she said, his each fresh utterance nerving her further, "but

very earnest; and, as you know, earnest work is always well done. Now Alice has written a full confession to Captain Trent—"

"What!" cried Bertie, aghast.

"To her husband," continued Mrs. Pauncefote, repressing a smile at his distress, "which he will receive this evening."

"Is she mad?" he exclaimed, thoroughly alarmed.

"She was, quite," said Clara Pauncefote, "but not any more. She says she has not the strength to make a verbal confession, so she has written it. Mine is to be verbal."

"Oh, nonsense!" said Bertie incredulously.

"We have both sworn to each other," said Clara steadily, "sworn most solemnly, to make a full confession to both our husbands this evening, except on one condition."

"Wh-wh-what's that?" stuttered the subaltern.

"That you engage yourself to Mrs. Spicer this afternoon," returned Clara, malevolently serious.

"Do what?" he gasped.

"Propose to Mrs. Spicer at once."

"I?" he exclaimed, a world of horror and astonishment in the perpendicular pronoun.

"Certainly. I've arranged it all," she asserted calmly.

"Arranged what?" he cried, astounded.

"I called on Mrs. Spicer when I left Mrs. Trent, and told her that you were in love with her—"

"Great heavens!" he gasped. "B-but I'm not!"

"I know that she's in love with you," she continued, ignoring his agitation. "I've known it for some time, so when I told her that you would perhaps call on her this afternoon to ask her to marry you she blushed like a schoolgirl."

"Why she's—she's old enough to be my mother!" stammered the lieutenant.

"Indeed, she is not!" said Clara. "She's thirty-six, and her husband left her three thousand a year. She has no children and is most respectable."

"She's—she's as ugly as sin!" muttered Bertie limply.

"Indeed, she is not," she asserted, keenly enjoying his objections. "She has a splendid figure, and her face is full of character. Anyway, it is all settled," she continued, moving toward the veranda door. "You have your choice. You can either propose to Mrs. Spicer, going to her house the minute you leave here, and announcing your engagement this evening—in which Mrs. Trent and I will willingly help you—and then settle down as a respectable married man, or else you can listen to what my husband and Captain Trent have to say when Mrs. Trent and I have told them everything."

"Oh, but you can't—" he commenced pleadingly, moving to the door with her to stop her exit.

"On my solemn honor," she asserted, raising her hand in attestation. "I swear it, and— Ah!" She broke off and recoiled a step as the door burst open and Major Pauncefote sprang toward her with open arms. Astonished at her shirking from him, he quickly followed her eyes and bit his lips with vexation as his rested on the perturbed figure of the subaltern for whom he had always felt an instinctive dislike.

"How d'you do, Boileau?" He nodded curtly, and turned to his wife. "Trent and I got a lift on the Resident's special," he said by way of explanation, and to his wife's ears almost by way of apology for his unexpected arrival, her heart beating for her husband's honest tones as it had never done in the past. "But what's the matter?" he continued, puzzled at their evident constraint. "Been giving Boileau a lecture?"

The subaltern laughed with an assumption of awkward ease and picked up his hat and cane. Mrs. Pauncefote clasped her left hand tightly to her heart and swallowed hard.

"You came just in time, George," she began, her tones tense but determined. She had taken the plunge, and it was better quickly over. "I have just told Mr. Boileau that I was going to make a confession to you."

"A confession?" repeated the Major blankly.

"Er-er—" stammered Bertie, moistening his lips in a vain endeavor at coherent speech.

"It is no use, Bertie," said the Major's wife, her mouth firmly set. "My husband has got to know. I made up my mind to tell you, George," she continued, turning to him, "and I would rather you heard it from my own lips before you—before—"

"What is it?" said the Major, growing vaguely alarmed at her evident difficulty, but totally unsuspicuous of any issue touching him nearly. "What's happened?"

"It's er-er—it's about me," spluttered Boileau hastily, perspiration breaking from every pore. "And—and Mrs. Spicer"; he added, gulping after the lady's name as if he had swallowed an unpleasant pill.

"Mrs. Spicer?" repeated the Major dully, while his wife looked with relieved amazement at the miserable Bertie.

"Yes, we're-er—we are going to be married," blurted out the cornered victim, his face drawn and his frame shaking as with ague.

"Well, er—by Jove, I congratulate you!" said the Major, extending his hand and blankly wondering at the subaltern's strange choice. He remembered the lady perfectly and the numerous garrison jokes cracked at her expense. Mayhap Boileau had had monetary losses, and the widow's three thousand a year flashed to his mind. "You're a lucky dog," he added, and turned to his wife. "Well, Clara," he continued, his mind relieved by the happy change in her countenance, "this is garrison news! I feared it was something unpleasant. Better have something, Boileau; this confession has shot you all to pieces." He opened the veranda door for the subaltern to pass through and gathered his wife in his arms for a swift embrace, catching his breath with delight at her warm response, which, though it savored somewhat of that of an overwrought child to its moth-

er, was distinctly an improvement on the quasi-coolness he had hitherto experienced.

He watched with half-amused eyes the glass that went unsteadily to the subaltern's lips, and being of a sympathetic nature, he mixed one for himself, and pledging the happy couple, clapped the curly-headed lover heartily on the back as he wished him

once more "Good luck!" at the bungalow gate.

"I'll send our *punkawallah* round with a note to Mrs. Trent," Clara Pauncefote called after him. "I know she'll be so glad. May I? I'd like to be the first to break the news."

"All right," he shouted hoarsely in return, and gnawing his mustache viciously, swung blindly down the road.



## MOTORS THAT PASS IN THE NIGHT

By C. A. ALLEN

**Y**OU may write of the ships that are passing  
Each other in darkness and gloom,  
Unseen and unsought, with never a thought  
For the derelicts drifting to doom;  
But even if swiftly they're passing,  
They'll glide silently out of your sight,  
So give me the crash and the clatter and dash  
Of the Motors that Pass in the Night.

And here's to the song of the siren,  
The far groping gleam of the light,  
And the fumes that arise, the dust in our eyes,  
From the Motors that Pass in the Night!



## ILLUSION

By MAUD A. BLACK

**W**HENCE come ye, O ye Shadows dim and gray?  
What is the message your pale lips would speak?  
Tell ye of things unknown of which I dream—  
Whispers from that far world my soul would seek?

Away, vain phantoms—ye but mock me still!  
Ye are but shadows of a bygone day—  
And I was dreaming I had reached that place  
Where unveiled Mystery would lead the way!

# THE LEANHAUN SHEE

By JEAN CARMICHAEL

**D**ONOVAN had been lying dreaming so long on the hilltop that the birds and squirrels that had come down to investigate matters had gone back to their trees satisfied that he was one of the woodland creatures, too. But he had heard none of their inquisitive chirping and chattering, as he lay there weaving strange fancies into a fairy web of words. Sometimes it was of the sky and the clouds and the May breeze he wove his songs, and sometimes it was of Marietta he dreamed, as he lay there with his eyes on the distant sea that lay dreaming, too, on that soft May afternoon.

After a long time, moments or hours or æons for all Donovan knew, a child came running through the long grass, chasing butterflies, listening to the bees, stooping to caress a flower. Once in sheer rapture at being out there on that lonely hilltop in that divine May wind, he stopped and threw his arms about the trunk of a giant oak and pressed his rosy cheek against the rough bark. Then suddenly he caught sight of the man lying there with the tall grass nodding over him, his sad eyes fixed on the slow moving great white clouds drifting across the blue.

"Oh!" he said. "Who are you?"

Donovan looked up into the child's wondering, half-frightened eyes. "I'm a faun," he said solemnly. "Don't you see my pointed furry ears?"

The child regarded them with careful scrutiny. "No," he said. "They aren't pointed and they aren't furry."

"That is because you cannot really see," the man told him. "Won't you stay and play with me?"

The child sat down in the long grass.

"Oh, yes," he said. "What shall we play?"

Donovan contemplated the subject. "It is fun just to lie here in the grass and hear the day go by and the earth humming on its axis," he said. "If you lie very still and look up into the sky you can sometimes hear very wonderful things. If it were night you might listen to the stars singing together. Did you ever do that? Now, however, when the stars are drowned in sunlight, if you listen you may hear the grass growing and the secrets the leaves are whispering to each other."

He suddenly forgot the child, as he leaned on his elbow and looked down with wondering, solemn eyes at the far-away blur on the horizon where the great city lay. An overwhelming wave of loneliness and wonder at the mystery of life swept over him. He felt like a being strayed by mistake from some distant world, wandering always lonely over the earth that had spurned him because he was a poet and the busy workaday world wanted no such alien creature.

The child regarded him for a long time with unwinking round eyes. "I do not understand you," he said at last. "But I like you, Faun."

The poet's eyes came back to the hilltop and studied the beautiful little face so near his own. "Thanks, old fellow," he said, and reached out his hand to shake the small brown soiled one. "It's nice to be liked—nicer than you know."

"Do you live up here? And who do you play with?" the boy next inquired.

"I live up here most of the time,"

Donovan said. "I like hilltops, don't you? I feel that sometimes I can stand on the edge of things and just fly off. My friends are delightful. They live all about here."

And then he told him how every tree housed its dryad and every little mound was a fairy ring, how he saw the white arms of naiads stretched out to him from every foaming waterfall, and how every cloud was a fairy ship that carried him away to Tir-nan-Og, the Land of the Living Heart. For Donovan had Irish blood in his veins and lived in a world of enchantment.

Then he sprang up, and with the boy's hand in his, went over to the verge of the hill. "See how steep it is down there!" he cried. "We can look over the treetops in the valley. Let's give a little leap in the air and land on that big cloud sailing away under that good west wind, and we'll sail over to that cloud island in the blue sky sea, and there we shall find—" His voice dropped as he looked far into the hills and valleys in the sky.

"What shall we find?" demanded the child, eyes expectant.

The poet came back with an effort from his dreams. "Whatever you want most to find," he said.

"I'd like to find a big iron train of cars." The child was enthusiastic over this game. "And a goat and a cart and a red wheelbarrow and—"

"Oh, most material of earthbound creatures!" Donovan threw himself on the grass again. "I wish that *my* heart could be content with a red wheelbarrow and a goat cart." He shook his head and sighed.

"What do you wish for?" the little boy asked, sitting down beside him.

"I wish I could reach Marietta's soul." Donovan took him into his confidence. "Her body is so very beautiful that her soul ought to be, but I can't seem to find it. You've had no troubles of that kind, I take it."

"No." The boy shook his head. "I don't think so."

The man threw back his head and laughed until the black curls shook, and a long lock fell across his white

forehead and he looked like some rollicking elfin creature.

The child did not like being laughed at. "What else do you want?" he asked by way of changing the conversation.

Donovan shook the black curl out of his eyes, and with his hands clasped about his knees, regarded him.

"I believe I'll confide in you, old chap," he said. "You are a sympathetic soul, even if you don't understand *some* things. I'll tell you now in confidence that I am a poet who writes beautiful songs that are not appreciated. The world doesn't want me, and if things go on I doubt if I stay here much longer. I'm sure there must be some world where I'm wanted more, don't you think so? I've just sent out a little book to seek its fortune and mine—Heaven send it soon! I made all the songs myself. They are made of the moan and sob of the sea and the spirit creatures that come sweeping down the wind, the lyric beauty of fading sunset skies, the gladness of spring, the joy of life, the sweet flesh of women and the inmost soul of me. But would you believe it, the critics have torn the poor little book to pieces and scattered it to the breezes—and it hurts to have your soul torn to bits. Poor things, it's just because they don't know; one can't blame them, but still—" He shook off his mood of depression and smiled his slow, sweet smile, as he looked into the child's innocent eyes. "Never mind; we know they are good, don't we? These are my two wishes: that Mr. Harvey Anstruther, the greatest critic in America, or the world for that matter, may find out how lovely the poems are, and that the man who wrote this book"—he pulled from his pocket a limp leather-covered copy of a certain world famous novel—"may be my friend. I love him now, but alas, I have no way of knowing him. I cannot even go where he is because, my friend, I am so poor that if a certain story I have sent to the magazines is not accepted soon, I may be thrown out into the cold world with no shelter

for my head, no food for my poor insides."

He leaped to his feet and began to dance like a veritable woodland creature on that breezy hilltop.

"You were an elf and I was a faun  
Back in the dawn of the world,"

he sang, and then stopped suddenly and leaned against the great oak. "Never mind," he remarked. "One always has the sky for a roof, and one can live somehow. There are hollow oaks when it rains, and I know a dryad, a lovely dryad, who would gladly share her lodging with me. She lives, by the way, in this tree. It is her arms that are stretched out over our heads to shelter us from the sun."

He stood so still with his eyes closed and a look of such unearthly rapture on his face that the child was almost frightened. He seemed to be listening to something very beautiful that came to him on the wind, something the child could not hear.

At last he opened his eyes. "There's the wind on the heath, brother," he said dreamily, and sat down beside his faithful little friend. "I will teach you how to concoct a May breeze," he offered. "And be sure to remember it. It may serve you well some time. Listen! You take three parts of fragrant apple blossoms, dew-covered, if possible"—he counted them off on his fingers—"three parts of lilac, with the moonlight on them, two parts of bee-laden horse chestnut bloom, made of roses and snow, two parts of fresh, upturned earth; put in a pinch of salt sea wind and add the essence of all new growing things; mingle carefully—and there you have it." He drank a long breath of it. "It is divine," he said.

"How do you know so much?" asked the child, awestruck.

"Oh, I know all sorts of secrets, because I am a faun, you know," the man explained. "I know stories, too."

"Oh, please!" The child's eyes were shining and he settled himself more comfortably to listen.

So, as the afternoon waned and the distant sea turned to a dark sapphire, the poet told him his Celtic fairy tales

of Niam and Oisin, of Gilla Dacker's horse, of the "little good people" and of the buried city of Is under the waters of Lough Leane, whose church bells may still be heard ringing faintly far away under fathoms of blue water, just as they rang before the magic fountain overflowed the valley and drowned them.

Together they listened with their ears to the grass to hear the tap-tap-tap of the Lepracaun's tiny hammer, as the fairy shoemaker worked busily in his underground shop trying to keep the "little good people," supplied with shoes.

"They wear them out so fast," Donovan explained, "what with dancing on moonlight nights and running and jumping on the mountainside and playing in the heather. Once I found a little shoe one of the fairies had lost. This is the song the Lepracaun sings:

"Tip, tap—rip, rap,  
Tick-a-tack-too.  
Scarlet leather, sewn together,  
This will make a shoe.  
Left, right, pull it tight;  
Summer days are warm;  
Underground in winter,  
Laughing at the storm.

"Big boots a-hunting,  
Sandals in the hall,  
White for a wedding feast,  
Pink for a ball.  
This way, that way,  
So we make a shoe;  
Getting rich, every stitch,  
Tick-tack-too."

"Oh, does he really sing that? I wish I could hear it. Faun," the child whispered, "did you ever see a fairy?"

"Why, sure!" The poet dropped into his native brogue. "It's Ireland that's full of them. Many a time have I seen them dancing in the moonlight on the heather, shaking down the holly berries from the hedges; and often I've seen them tearing the thatch off the roofs of the cottages—though some people will say it's only the wind. But we who know take off our hats and say, 'God bless 'em!' for fear they'll be angry with us. Anyone can see them if he only has faith enough. That's

why they like to live in the little green isle over the sea, because it's there the people have faith."

"Could I see them, Faun?"

The poet pondered. "They say that they are very much pleased if you will but leave a little saucer of cream for them on the window sill at night, and sometimes the peasants strew primroses before the door to make a golden path for them to bring good luck into the house. You might try one of those methods. The patron fairy of the Gaelic poets, if I may call her so, is the Leanhaun Shee. For long have I loved her, child, but, alas, I fear she will be my death. She is always restless and capricious, and they say that the reason most poets die young, unrecognized, starving, is because of love of her. She is their inspiration and their doom." He looked about him fearfully. "If she should be about now, boy—if she should hear me talking about her—"

The little boy shuddered and drew near the shelter of the man's shoulder, and so they sat for a long time in a sympathetic silence. Then at last Donovan moved and sighed, and shading his eyes with his hand, sat looking far into the distance where the sky was brightening behind the sea.

"I can almost see it—Tir-nan-Og," he said—"the Country of the Living Heart, the Land of the Ever Young."

The afternoon grew more golden. Long blue shadows stretched before them on the hilltop, and down in the valley it would soon be twilight. The breeze blew up cool from the sea, bringing a hint of salt perfume. The man sighed. "We must be going down to earth again, little one," he said.

They stood for a moment, hand in hand, on the edge of the hill, profoundly silent. The quiet and peace of the evening seemed to envelop them like a garment. Then, as they watched, out of the ocean rolled the moon, sending a long, quivering golden path across the waters.

"It's the path to Tir-nan-Og," the poet said.

All the gay, rollicking faun mood

had left Donovan, as they descended out of the glow on the hilltop into the twilight of the valley. The child thought he had never seen any man look so white, so solemn. He was almost terrified at the look on his face. When he reached the foot of the hill he stopped, breathless.

"Please, Faun," he said, "I must go home. It's getting late, and mother will be worried. Good-bye." He timidly held out a hand.

Donovan grasped it, looking down tenderly at the child. "Good-bye," he said, and still held the little brown hand. "May the fairies watch over you, lad!"

When the boy had run down the lane and was climbing the stile to take the short cut over the meadows, he turned and saw the man still standing where he had left him, and he waved his hand. Donovan waved back, and then turned, and with slow and weary steps he went down the road under the apple trees, that showered him with pink and white blossoms. But he was not thinking of apple blossoms now. When he turned in at the gate before the little whitewashed cottage nestled under giant oaks, his landlady watched him coming with bent head and white, sad face.

"He looks as though he were starving, poor man," she said to herself, not knowing how right she was, although it was not for bread he was hungry.

On his table in the tiny room under the roof there were letters, and when he saw them he pressed his hands to his eyes, afraid to look.

"Oh, if it might only be good news!" he cried passionately. "Kind Heaven, send that it may not *always* be evil! I am so tired, so tired!"

He picked up the letter directed in a woman's dashing hand and read it through at a glance with blanching face; there were only four lines and the name "Marietta." Then he tore it in tiny pieces and flung them on the floor and turned to the others. Three were imperative demands that certain bills be paid at once, and the large white

envelope brought back, with an editor's polite regrets, the story he had sent to a famous magazine.

"It's the Leanhaun Shee," he said, and sank down in the chair and buried his face in his crossed arms.

On the same afternoon in a distant city Glendenning, the great novelist, came into Harvey Anstruther's office, where the editor and critic was hard at work. He was flushed, and his eyes shone with a radiant light, as though he had been contemplating something very wonderful. Without a word of salutation, he rushed up to Anstruther's desk and flung down a little limp leather-covered volume.

"Man," he cried excitedly, "have you seen this? There's a new star on the horizon. What's the world coming to that no one has discovered this book? I believe the damned little carping critics have had the audacity to try to tear it to pieces! Why, this note hasn't been struck since the sea closed over Shelley! Read this! And this!" He tore open the book, nervously turning the leaves. "There, that 'Hilltop' one—and this, 'Pan's Pipes'! Why, the fauns and dryads themselves must have whispered it to him while he lay sleeping in the forest."

Anstruther looked up with an amused look in his eyes. He was used to Glendenning's enthusiasm, and he was so tired of having people discover for him new stars that always turned out to be fireflies or, at the best, comets that disappeared in the darkness before one could really see them. Then his eyes dropped to the page.

It was only a bit of a poem, two short stanzas, but he read them twice and then turned the page and read the next, and straightway forgot Glendenning and the editorial he was writing and everything in the wide world but the fact that someone was speaking straight to his heart. Finally he looked up into Glendenning's brilliant eyes that were fastened eagerly upon him.

"I think a new star *has* risen," he said deliberately, weighing his words. "No wonder you look as though you

had been drinking champagne in the middle of the afternoon! Who is this—Gavin Donovan?" He turned back to the title page. "Why haven't we heard of him before?"

"I have been talking to Horton, his publisher. He doesn't know much about him, but he tells me the man is poor. Of course! Who ever heard of a man writing such divine winged words on a fare of *pâté de foie gras* and ortolans? He says he has a face like Shelley, but more beautiful, so sensitive, so ethereal that the spirit seems to have almost broken through the veil of the flesh. He comes of a good Dublin family, as far as wealth and position go, but it seems he's broken loose from his people, because his father, who apparently hasn't an ounce of poetry in his make-up, objected to his son being anything but a lawyer like his forebears. Heaven knows where the fellow gets his gift! He's one of those inspired geniuses that crop up once in a century with no reason for being. Look at Shakespeare! Look at Keats! It's up to you, Anstruther, to do something."

"I will, gladly. I'll write a review for the *New Century* at once, although it won't be out for a fortnight, and I'll send a column to the *Times* today. Clear out, and I'll do it now—only, for Heaven's sake, don't take away the book; I must have it."

Glendenning turned to go. "Don't forget you are coming out to Cedar Croft soon for a week end," he reminded him. "Telephone me on the day about your train, and I'll meet you with the motor car and take you for a spin before dinner. The apple trees and lilacs are out in the country. It's spring—you may not know, you poor city creature!"

One thing after another, however, delayed that visit for nearly a month, and in the meantime appeared Anstruther's famous review, the "most notable contribution to English letters in a century," the review that everyone read and marveled at, and that set the world to reading Donovan's slender little volume of poems. Everyone re-

members the sudden rise of Gavin Donovan; like Byron, he became famous in a day.

"My dear fellow"—Glendenning met Anstruther at the station with a gripping handclasp—"you've made that lad famous. These poor blind groping moles of human beings! Wouldn't you have thought they could have found out for themselves what a marvel there was in their midst? Now that you have shown them, however, they are mad with enthusiasm. They would crown this young estray from Olympus with laurel if they could find him. But he's hiding away in obscurity, not caring for the limelight. I've something in store for you. Horton wrote today that Donovan is living quietly not fifteen miles from here at a tiny little village called Annandale. What do you say to running out there now to see him—perhaps bring him back with us? There's plenty of time before dinner, and as it's bachelor hall, you needn't dress. I must confess I've had to hold myself down all day not to go and see him without waiting for you."

Anstruther assented eagerly. "Do you know, Glendenning, that young fellow has bothered the life out of me the last fortnight," he said as they spun smoothly down the long, straight road toward the sea. "I can't seem to get away from him. He's been haunting me. I was absorbed in the book and in the articles I've written about him, but it was more than all that. It was as though his spirit itself came and stood beside my desk. I hope that when I see the real young man in the flesh, and he turns out to be thin and anemic, with long hair, that the spell may be broken."

"He won't be like that," Glendenning maintained. "Didn't I tell you that Horton says he looks like Shelley? Poor young thing, think of looking like that and writing divine poetry and living in this material age! He should have died a hundred years ago."

"But I predict that a hundred years from now"—Anstruther's eyes were the eyes of a seer—"a hundred years

from now people will be learning by heart 'The Torch of Life' as the most perfect lyric written in the twentieth century."

"For so young a man he must have drunk deep of life," Glendenning mused. "Childhood, love, passion, despair, hope, life, death—all are touched with a divine touch. One would think he had but lately strayed from the playgrounds of Paradise, to read his fairy songs and the 'Child of the Wind'; and then again in that haunting 'Soul of Marietta,' one would say that the lad had felt all the woe and passion and sin of the world, had 'fingered all the stops of the spirit.'"

"A divine youth," Anstruther said. "You tell me he is but twenty-three now, and has already achieved so much? If he keeps his head and is not spoiled by the world's too fulsome flattery, one may expect a second Keats."

They were silent for the most part, buried in their thoughts, as they ran smoothly, rapidly down the lonely road through the woods. But as a sudden hint of the sea came to them on the wind, Glendenning began to quote half under his breath two of Donovan's lovely sea lyrics. With the words still echoing in their minds, they drove out of the woods and fields into the tiniest of little hamlets nestled at the foot of an overhanging hill. There was only one street, a grass-bordered road that rambled under stately arching elms, past quaint old houses, empty and falling to rack and ruin for the most part. Grassgrown paths led through thick shrubbery to unused front doors. Even the houses that showed signs of occupancy were hermetically sealed at the front, according to the ancient New England custom, best parlors being only opened for such state occasions as funerals and weddings. There seemed to be no one stirring in the sleepy little village as they looked about them for someone to tell them where Gavin Donovan lived.

"It might be Goldsmith's Deserted Village," Glendenning remarked. "I never saw so many empty houses, such

an air of desolation. Does no one live here, not even an enchanted poet?"

At a quaint cottage halfway down the street he told the chauffeur to stop. "I am sure," he exclaimed, "that Donovan can live nowhere else. Smell the syringa! See the rambler rose trying to climb up to look into the tiny window under the eaves, and the whole exquisite little poet's cot, sheltered, brooded over by those two great oaks! Baucis and Philemon, I'll wager. No one but the man who wrote those poems could live here. I will go and inquire."

Anstruther followed him, and together they opened the little gate and started in single file up the narrow path between the great syringa bushes, that crowded close up to the walls of the houses, darkening the lower windows. The perfume of the waxen white blossoms was intoxicating.

Flung down on the grass beside the doorstep a little boy lay sobbing. They had not seen him at first, he lay so still; but now he raised a tear-stained face.

Anstruther started. "My boy," he said kindly, seeing the tears, "can you tell me if Mr. Gavin Donovan lives here?"

To his surprise, the lad flung himself down once more, sobbing wildly. At the same moment an old woman opened the door, a motherly, stout old woman, with a kind face and tear-reddened eyes. She looked curiously from the big red motor car, panting at the gate, to the two distinguished-looking men, who seemed to bring with them a bit of the great world lying beyond the hills.

Anstruther repeated his question. "We are looking for Mr. Gavin Donovan; can you tell us where he lives?"

"Are you friends of Mr. Donovan's?" she asked, and wiped her eyes with her apron. "Come in—come in."

She ushered them into the immaculate little parlor with its tightly closed blinds and its stale, musty air that always haunts seldom used best parlors.

"So you were friends of the poor young gentleman?" she said. "It was only yesterday that he left us, and you did not know?"

Glendenning leaned forward in his chair, with his most impressive manner veiling his anxiety and disappointment. "Went away?" he repeated. "Madam, let us have no mistake. We are talking about Mr. Gavin Donovan, the famous young poet, the most famous poet of the century."

"Our Mr. Donovan wasn't famous." She shook her head. "He was just a poor young gentleman who boarded here. He used to spend all his time on the hill yonder, writin' and writin', and he'd come down with his face lookin' like he'd been in Heaven, sir. And then, poor man, he'd get letters that would seem to crush all the brightness out of him, and his eyes grew bigger and blacker and his face so white, except where two red spots would burn in his cheeks, and him so feverish. Then—it's a month ago, sir—he came down with a fever. I found him in a dead faint in his room, with some bits of paper all tore up around him. It was a letter from a lady, sir, and I heard afterwards that the young lady who used to write to him so much was goin' to marry a rich old man. The doctor said it was typhoid he had, but I think it was a broken heart. I don't know anything about your famous poet, sir, but our Mr. Donovan died last night."



**T**HE Wall Street lamb is never looked upon as the black sheep of the family until he has lost his money.

# HEART KINGDOM

By BLANCHE SHOEMAKER WAGSTAFF

**I** BUILT a golden palace in the sun,  
Woven of dreams, of fairy fabric made.  
Within I put the soul of Love, arrayed  
In shining garb, a jeweled crown upon  
His hyacinthine brow. Soft music played  
Within the amber walls and lilies grew  
Profusely in the perfumed willow shade.  
It was a Paradise for Love; we two  
Dwelt in glad peace from all the world apart.  
Love was my King, the sovereign of my heart.

Years passed. One day I sought the sacred shrine  
And found Love gone. The kingdom that I gave  
He took with him. My heart is no more mine;  
I stand within Love's palace a poor slave!



# THE IMMORTAL MUSIC

By JOHN KENDRICK BANGS

**T**HE soft, sweet notes of woodland birds,  
The crooning of the lowing herds,  
The rustling zephyrs as they pass  
Across the tree tops and lush grass,  
The humming of the bees, the throng  
Of insects with their evensong,  
The chirp of cricket and the note  
Of tree toads on the air afloat,  
The monotones of waters free,  
The murmurs of the forest tree,  
The rich crescendos of the gale,  
Staccato of the rain and hail—  
These are the songs our fathers stirred;  
These are the songs that Adam heard;  
These are the anthems that will be  
Unchanged through all eternity:  
The Symphony Divine, that rolls  
From Heaven forth to human souls,  
To cheer the heart and ease earth's strife  
With promise of immortal life.

# THE DILETTANTI

By FREDERIC HOBART

"WELL, that's not bad for a first attempt," said Cyril, as he fashioned the long fair strand of hair into a bewitching little curl and tucked it into its place with a hairpin.

"Liar!" she rejoined calmly.

"Not a bit," he said. "This new style has been in only about a fortnight, he added musingly, "but I used to be an expert with the Grecian knot."

The scene was not a hairdresser's shop, but a backwater of the River Thames on the most perfect August evening, and the two are lolling in a well cushioned punt.

Mona St. Gerran dismissed the hand lightly resting from its labors upon her shoulder by asking for a cigarette, and having allowed it to be lighted at some length, leaned back into her corner of the punt and surveyed the youth before her with an amused smile.

Nor was it an ill favored picture upon which she looked. He was a tall, slim youth of twenty-three, possessed of a plenteous crop of wavy brown hair, brushed back from his forehead, and a magnificent pair of dark brown eyes, which seemed to be dreamily smoldering, yet ever pleading for the breath to kindle them to a flame; his mouth would not have suffered from the concealing powers of a mustache. She was in vivid contrast to him, with her cold gray eyes, into which one had to look long to discover the possibilities of a thaw, and her mass of fair hair gathered in clustering curls at the back of her head, complexion of a transparent paleness, clad in a soft green dress, the sleeves of which she had rolled up, thereby revealing two soft, white, well

rounded arms, seeming capable of an exquisite tenderness.

A wanderer upon the other bank paused, struck by the picture of perfect love before him, so lost to all the world did they seem; nor could he know they were but lost within themselves.

Three years before he had first met her, she being then at the anticipative age between the schoolroom and the ballroom. Each depended for nourishment upon the sweet pastures of the emotions, and so it was but natural they should drift together and side by side graze upon the ever growing grass.

She had sufficient culture for society to call her "intellectual," and the same crowd, though in perhaps a more familiar sphere, would also have described her as "highly eligible" by reason of the prospect of a goodly inheritance.

He was of noble birth and had a meager patrimony, which, supplemented by his wits, maintained him in a regiment of dragoons.

He liked the part he played, for it brought with it much worldly comfort and plenty of distraction from the realities of life, which he found most irksome. Moreover, he played it well, for he was too adept an artist to weaken his foothold by any talk of love; a delicate suggestion of its latent possibility was all that was necessary, and took longer to satiate.

But this summer evening, as he lay back idly enjoying his cigarette and the picture before him, he could not help thinking of the cruel blows she held in store for some, and sighed with relief to think they could not be for him. More especially did he think of Stephen Welch, a poor young land agent on a

neighboring estate, whom she seemed to take a special delight in torturing.

He had been at Harrow with Stephen and had a great esteem for him, and, as far as his nature was capable, a little gratitude, for Stephen had once pulled him out of some very dirty water, getting no small amount of mud on himself in the process. Latterly their ways had lain differently, poor health and no interest having obliged Stephen to take up a land agency, while he, being endowed with plenty of both, had gone into a good cavalry regiment and had no worries but those of finance, to which he was well accustomed.

Stephen Welch had come upon the scene only during the last year, and whenever Cyril Tremaine was staying with the St. Gerrans, Mona employed him as a needle with which she would prick and torture Stephen; not that Cyril was unaccustomed to the process, for he knew that one of his claims to her society lay in the fact that he might at any moment be employed by the auctioneer as hammer in the marriage market. But this was such a poor, humble, honest bidder.

Of course with each other neither Mona nor Cyril ever did anything so futile or banal as to introduce a third for the purpose of stimulation; but, thought Cyril, how could poor Stephen know that? Moreover, he well knew the myriad little ways that Mona had of convincing someone that he was her special choice, and so he decided that he would go away for a while and leave Mona to her devices, when he felt sure that the luckless Stephen would either be brought to the point so eagerly sought by all coquettes and get the inevitable rebuff, or might even discover his delusions for himself.

Three whole months passed without a sight of her; only occasionally was he reminded of her existence by some piece of gossip concerning a new aspirant, one or two of whom appeared to be "nearly good enough," as he put it to himself, and he pondered on the wisdom of such a protracted selection.

He was not sorry when one morning's post brought a charming little note ask-

ing him to stay with the St. Gerrans for a hunt ball in the neighborhood.

The party consisted of Mona and her sister, two cousins and a certain Sir Walter Bryant, a man of middle age and considerable opulence, whom Cyril mentally described to himself as "nibbling." At the last moment one of the cousins telegraphed a refusal and the motor had to be sent to fetch Stephen Welch to fill the gap, who, of course, turned up delighted; a very wholesome picture he made as he came into the room in his well fitting pink coat and with his strong, clean face aglow with pleasure.

Sir Walter offered to take the whole party to the ball in his fine big motor, but Mona said she would go in her own little car with Cyril as escort, by which he gathered that he was to fill his usual role of goad to the hesitating Baronet.

A plentiful supply of champagne and some excellent brandy warmed Cyril to his task; nor would any man have thought it hard, who gazed at the pale, fair vision framed in clinging black.

They started, and as Cyril sank back into his corner of the luxurious little motor he really felt that life was good, and so, apparently, did Mona, for she gave a little sigh of sheer contentment. For a while they talked, a language of half-finished sentences, full of delicate subtleties, and one intelligible only to themselves.

His cigarette finished, he let his hand fall beneath the rug and rest upon the seat beside him, where, strange to tell, it grew conscious of company close at hand, and, seeking, found a little fair white wanderer, upon which it lightly rested, feeling a scarcely perceptible pressure in reception. Now, though he had often been allowed to hold her hand long and tenderly over his adieus, he was never permitted to indulge in any familiarities in cold blood; he therefore scented a trap for fools, knowing that his capture would be a source of no small satisfaction.

They arrived in due course at the Town Hall, where the ball was to take place, and he engaged himself to her for supper and the greater part of the

last half of the program, which enabled the Baronet and poor Stephen to nibble at the fruit and taste its joys during the first part of the evening and enviously watch its consumption for the rest of the time.

Having done his duty once or twice with the cousin and with Mona's sister, Cyril found some old friends and repaired to an oyster bar, where the usual masculine reminiscences were exchanged and a plentiful supply of oysters and champagne disposed of. Then, feeling in a state of perfect satisfaction with himself and all the world Cyril went in search of Mona and took her off to supper.

Mona, feeling tired, took a glass of champagne; then they danced two delightful waltzes. A little more light stimulant was followed by a most perfect two-step, and Cyril, who was rapidly abandoning himself to fate, Bacchus speeding him on his way, noticed with satisfaction that Sir Walter was a restless spectator. He could not help admiring the look of cheery good humor and appreciation of their performance which he saw on Stephen Welch's face, thinking to himself how well the fellow masked his feelings, for, though he never took his eyes off Mona, to a spectator it seemed merely a regard of watchful admiration for her talent as a dancer.

The music stopped, and in silence they made for a little balcony overlooking some public gardens. An impassive moon, surrounded by a myriad of twinkling stars, surveyed the twain with silent cynicism.

As he followed her out into the night, the cool, fresh air fanned a fevered forehead, and the race consciousness of hundred of years welled up within him. Oblivious of the past, indifferent of the future, he caught her in his arms, and, holding her close to him, looked down into her face, upturned in astonishment, and upon her lips pressed a long and burning kiss.

There was silence broken by a little gasp of horror. He held her from him, looking deep into the eyes which a while ago had spoken a thousand meanings, and found them cold and gray.

Then the gods came to his aid, for in a flash he saw the only way, and seizing her hand, whispered with passionate conviction: "Mona, for God's sake, believe that it is genuine." A pause and then a soft, "I do."

He lightly pressed his lips to the cold hand, and murmuring, "Thank you," followed her into the ballroom. She sought out Stephen for the last few dances; he returned to the balcony and lighted a meditative cigarette.

He murmured to himself, "A fool, a fool, a motley fool!" for he knew that some people may not be lightly treated nor some things lightly done.

Mona's society had been to him a source of infinite pleasure, but his claim to it lay in his power of conveying delicate possibilities, not in realizing them, for with Mona anticipation was the soul of life, realization immediate satiety.

He congratulated himself, however, on his promptness in seizing on the only way of assuaging her wounded self-respect and vindicating his conduct, but he knew that way was the deathblow to the future: he knew, too, that she believed him, and he knew that whatever might happen, it would not be the unexpected — that would have been tedious to a degree.

On awaking the next morning Cyril rang his bell and ordered a large cup of tea and a Bradshaw; having made his preparations for departure by the first convenient train, and, with the gratitude born of a dry mouth, drunk his tea, he took pencil and paper and started to concoct a pretty little allegorical note of farewell, in which he likened himself to the captain of a ship tossed by the stormy seas of the emotions onto a rock. "Nor," he went on to say, "could he blame the rock, of whose existence he had always been aware, but rather should he execrate the winds that blew, and pray that he might some day gain the strength to swim ashore." Having composed this effusion, he lay back in bed and was reading it over again with great complacency, when he was interrupted by his valet coming in with "a note from Miss Mona, sir."

**It was quite brief and to the point:**

Boathouse, 11:30.  
M.

This completely nonplused him. That she should guess he would go off by an early train was not strange, but that she should stop him from doing so, and above all, ask to see him—well, he was a pretty unblushing sinner, but even he had to confess to a good deal of trepidation at such an encounter “not in the holy night, but in the shameful day,” and only a few hours after, too.

He tied his cravat with great precision but with no heed to the result, for he was gazing into the glass at other things and fighting with all his better judgment against a persistent little thought that would keep creeping in.

Psychology was father to the thought—a knowledge of the emotions of youth.

He thought of the first time a woman had ever kissed him, and of all it had meant to him for many a long day.

He mused on. Though she had not responded, she had not withdrawn, and did not his knowledge of her tell him it was impossible, he would almost have said that it was not a new sensation.

Ye gods, it is a dangerous thing, that first token of a mighty power! It may be the forerunner of a great joy or of a great temptation or of a grief which thirsts for death. And then the eternal ego in the man asserted itself, driving forth feeble remorse as he bethought him that she had worldly possessions and that, should they not prove a strong enough incentive, in time she might be disillusioned.

A moment after, he emerged from his reverie and laughed at all such idle thoughts.

They met at the boathouse at eleven thirty.

A cheery “Good morning” was exchanged, and they started down the river bank. ‘Twas mid-December, but the day was mild and a rosy-tinted sun softened the harsh outlines of the naked trees and touched the swollen river with a russet brown.

A roomy wooden seat beneath a drooping willow invited rest and they sat down. He held out his cigarette case and she, taking one, lit it for herself, with a trembling hand, he noted; and then having watched a few small gray clouds curl upward and disperse, she began talking of the people at the ball the night before. He knew what was in her mind and falling in with her mood, prattled airy nothings. Having never used what they called the crude and obvious language of the common world, they shrank from the simple speech in which alone real life can find expression, vainly seeking similes instead. A little quaver in her voice made him look up and meet a pair of swimming eyes.

“Oh, Cyril, I’ve been a brute,” she said.

“Who has forever made me grateful by her great belief,” he murmured aptly, but in his inmost heart tasting the bitter gall of shame.

“You see, I never would have tried if I hadn’t been sure I couldn’t succeed, but Stephen begged me to so hard.”

“Stephen—succeed”—he murmured in bewilderment.

“Yes; we’ve been secretly engaged for nearly a year now, and he seemed really fond of you and anxious to do you a good turn by giving you what he called a profitable lesson; but oh, forgive me,” and she broke down utterly.

And from aloft the Spirit of Comedy looked down upon her children.



**T**HE only trouble a woman finds it hard to bear is the one she cannot tell her friends.

# THE SUBSTITUTE\*

By EFFIE ELLSLER WESTON

TOM FLINT (*a shoemaker*)

NED BENTLEY (*a tramp, but with the earmarks of good breeding*)

JIM BENTLEY (*Ned's brother*)

ROSE PERRY (*a young girl, engaged to Jim*)

TIME: *The Civil War.*

PLACE: *A small town in Ohio.*

**S**CENE—*Interior of a cobbler's shop. There is an open window and a practical door in the back, a door at the left, and a small fireplace at the right. The furnishings are in keeping with the vocation of the occupant.*

*At the rise of the curtain the orchestra is playing a patriotic air. When the curtain is fully up, the music ceases in the orchestra, and is followed by fifes and drums behind the scenes.*

*TOM FLINT is discovered at his bench, humming a tune as he works. He occasionally takes up a shoe to inspect his work more closely. The fifes and drums cease playing as NED BENTLEY passes the window. He pauses just long enough to look in, as he passes, and comes to the door, which is open. He is a broken down, seedy man, showing the effects of drink, but still having the marks of gentility. As FLINT works, he resumes his humming.*

NED  
You're patriotic.

TOM (*without looking up*)  
Shouldn't wonder—I was born that way.

NED  
Well, I'm patriotic in my way, too. Never have I been known to refuse to drink to America, the Land of the Free.

TOM (*chuckling*)  
Nor to any other land that'll supply the drink, eh?

NED  
You're a humorist. But to prove how much you are wrong, let me tell you I'm ready to do the "tramp,

"tramp" act right now, but for one thing. (*He lifts one foot and shows a large hole in the sole of his shoe.*) A man can't march far with a hole like that, letting in the changing elements.

TOM  
You're a rum 'un.

NED  
I ought to be, I've been at it long enough to become thoroughly soaked.

TOM  
Don't seem to me I've seen you before.

NED  
Possibly not. I'm of a retiring disposition, and take to country roads in

\*Acting rights reserved.

preference to populous streets, for fear my friends may annoy me with their attentions.

TOM

Where do you come from?

NED

Well, my ancestral dwelling is, most of the time, Hades, until I wake up from the sulphurous atmosphere to find myself a gentleman at large on a tour of the world.

TOM (*with humor*)

I guess you're takin' it in by easy stages, eh?

NED

Easy stages! I never found one that was not warranted to jolt the life out of you. No, I prefer to foot it. At present I am on my way to the city nearby, to see the brave fellows drafted in to fight the glorious fight of liberty.

TOM

And are you going to enlist?

NED

Not if I can help myself. The fact is, a physical infirmity prevents my becoming one of Uncle Sam's boys, much as I should like to follow the flag of my country.

TOM

And what brought you to my shop?

NED

Stopping to rest near a fine old home up the road, a kind young lady invited me to partake of breakfast, and while doing so, remarked that my footwear was somewhat weather worn. Then she said old Tom Flint she knew would fix me up; that he was the oldest and best shoemaker that ever doctored a decrepit piece of leather, and that I need only mention the name of "little Rose," to open up the blossoms of his generosity like a flower.

TOM (*chuckling*)

Little Rose Perry! Many's the time I've dandled her on my knee when she came to tell old Tom her troubles, and she does it yet. Wild Rose, some called her, until young handsome Jim

Bentley caught her and got her to promise to marry him.

NED

Jim Bentley—does he live hereabouts?

TOM

No, not here, but in the town nearby. Do you know him?

NED

I used to. Doubtless the time-honored saying may be familiar that you must never judge a man by the clothes he wears. Fact is, this Jim Bentley you spoke of just now lived in my vicinity when he was a very little shaver, and many's the battle I fought for him with the big boys. He entered college just a short time before I was dism—I should say, completed my course—ahem—and started in business.

TOM

Judging by your appearance, I should say you didn't make much of a success at what you was doing.

NED

No; I tried to form a liquor trust, but couldn't raise the necessary capital. But tell me something more about young Bentley. He used to be fond of me.

TOM

Then you must be worth something, for Jim doesn't take a liking to many. After he came from college he didn't put on any airs whatever, but just buckled right down to work on the old place, and some do say he had a pretty hard time of it, too, and once came near losing the home through the doings of some scamp his father trusted. Then his mother died, and that broke him up. It was then he met Rose Perry, and it wasn't long before they concluded they would hitch together for life, but not until Jim had the money in bank for a rainy day. It's there now, and little Rose will be Mrs. Bentley in June.

NED

Why, that's only a week away.

TOM

Yes, and I've an old shoe of hers which she wore when a little one to throw after her on the wedding day for good luck. Talking of shoes, I reckon I must put a shutter on that window in yours, or Miss Rose'll give me a piece of her mind the next time she comes to see me.

NED

Could you in the meantime accommodate me with something to take their place while I wait, in case someone should come in? Wishing to travel light—and I have succeeded beyond my expectations—I omitted my hand luggage, and my hosiery is somewhat soiled and worn.

TOM

Oh, I see. Well, I reckon I can scare up something for you. (*He gets out a pair of carpet slippers, which he hands to Ned.*) They're a bit gay, but you don't mind that.

NED

Not a bit. (*He removes his shoes as he speaks and hands them to Tom.*) And while you are at work on your errand of mercy, I'll take a short nap here in this chair, if you've no objection. The country air has made me a bit drowsy, and looking at these glorious colors, I shall fancy myself in an old garden amid the hollyhocks and sunflowers. (*He seats himself in the armchair before the fireplace, his back to Tom.*)

TOM

Go ahead. I guess you're not likely to be disturbed. (*He returns to his work. There is a slight pause.* ROSE PERRY passes the window and enters the door. *She appears bright and happy.*)

ROSE

Good morning, Mr. Flint.

TOM

Good morning, Miss Rose. Bless your pretty face, I should think you'd make the rest of the flowers envious when they look up at you.

ROSE (*laughing*)

If I were given to vanity, Mr. Flint, you certainly would spoil me with all

the nice things you say to me. (*Ned turns in his chair to look at her.*)

NED

So, that's Jim's sweetheart! (*He turns back, but conveys the impression of listening.*)

ROSE

On my way for the morning mail, I stopped to see if Johnnie's shoes were finished. You know you were to put copper toes on them this time; he's such a kicker that leather ones don't wear.

TOM

They're not quite ready yet, Miss Rose, but I warrant the ones that I put on will leave a copper plate impression on the one he kicks. (*He laughs.*)

ROSE

Well, I'll stop as I come back, then. (*She goes toward the door, then returns.*) Oh, by the way, Mr. Flint, did a poor man come to see you, who said I sent him?

TOM

Why, yes. (*He is about to make Ned's presence known, when he catches his eye. Ned has turned in his chair and is gesticulating to Tom to be silent.*) Fact is—oh, yes—yes—he left his shoes to be mended. (*In confusion, he picks them up to show them, when he again catches Ned's eye, who threatens him in dumb show with his fist. Tom drops the shoes.*) The byplay is unnoticed by ROSE.)

ROSE

Left his shoes! He surely never went out without any?

TOM

Oh, no. You see, his socks—I should say—he—he put on another pair until his own were finished.

ROSE

You dear old man! You are too modest to tell me you loaned him a pair from your own stock. Poor fellow—he looked so tired as he sat by the wayside to rest himself. I somehow think he has seen better days.

TOM

You always had a tender heart from the time you were a little one, Miss Rose.

ROSE

It may sound foolish, but as he sat there, with his eyes closed, his head resting against a tree, there seemed to be almost a resemblance to my Jim, and before I knew it I asked him if he was hungry.

NED

God bless her for such a thought!

TOM

And what did he say?

ROSE (*laughingly imitating NED*)

He lifted himself up, and taking off his shabby hat as he made me a bow, said with the air of a gentleman: "I plead guilty to the charge, though the habit of eating may be vulgar." Whereupon I took him to the house, and though he certainly was hungry, his manners were as refined as his language was educated. (*NED rises, bows courteously and resumes his seat unobserved.*)

TOM (*laughing*)

Take care, Miss Rose, or we shall have some stranger carrying you off from Millbank before we know it.

ROSE

Then it will have to happen soon, for in a week's time I expect to be Mrs. Bentley. (*She makes a courtesy.*)

TOM

Jim Bentley's a lucky man.

ROSE

Oh, Mr. Flint, it is I who am the fortunate one. Through all the trials that have come to Jim, he has never wavered. He might have gone to the city and bettered himself, but he chose to remain with his parents in their old age, and when his mother died calling for the other son that she had lost—it was Jim that soothed her. I bless the day he asked me to marry him. But, there, I must run along for the mail. Only think, it is the last letter I expect to receive as Miss Rose Perry!

TOM

My blessing on you both, and maybe one of these days I shall have another little Rose to make shoes for. (*Notices her confusion.*) Ahem—but we mustn't get on too fast. I'll have the shoes ready for you when you come back, Miss Rose.

ROSE

Very well; I'll be back soon. (*She goes out.*)

TOM (*after a slight pause, looking over to the chair where NED is sitting*)

I reckon my visitor is taking a nap. (*He goes back to his workbench and takes up a child's copper-toed shoes.*)

NED (*rising*)

Jim's a lucky fellow, but he deserves it. Where are they to be married—I mean Miss Rose and Bentley?

TOM

Here, at Millbank; and then Jim is going to rob our garden by transplanting our Rose to his own. Perhaps you'll want to see them hitched.

NED

No, I don't think my appearance would be in keeping with the occasion.

TOM

But if you're an old friend—

NED

It's been some time now since Jim and I chummed together. But there was a time when we were great pals.

TOM

And you just got separated, I s'pose.

NED

Yes, by the same old route—fast company, late hours and gambling. God! If a man could only wake up in time to see the finish of the game, before he lets himself drop into the gutter!

TOM

But that wasn't the life Jim Bentley led.

NED

No, he saw the folly of it, and tried to stem the tide for me; but I, like a fool, was hilarious with the success of

popularity—to be slapped on the back, to be called a good fellow. That lasted only as long as my money held out. Then the men and women with whom I roistered fell away from me, one by one. They passed me in the street as a stranger. Only one hand was held out to me—Jim's; and that one, in a moment of drunken frenzy, I cursed and flung aside. It don't take long for the finish. I went down the hill of respectability fast, and woke up one day, sober enough, to know I was an outcast, a thing on society's fringe, a tramp.

TOM

Well, why didn't you pull yourself together again, man?

NED (*with a bitter laugh*)

As if I didn't try! Again and again I struggled to my feet, but each time the memory of some infernal folly I had been guilty of rose up before me as if to mock me. All of those I called friends gave me up as a bad job, and I sank back among the flotsam of humanity, forgotten by all.

TOM

Have you no one that cares about you?

NED

Do you suppose I haven't decency enough left not to want them to, if I had? But I haven't. 'Tisn't often that I let myself get sober enough to think, but that old home up the road and that girl's face got into my noddle and made me foolish.

TOM

Then they must have been sent to you for the purpose. Don't be such an out and out mule as to fight against good when it comes to you. Pull yourself together, man, and stay here with old Tom Flint for a while. If there's enough for one, there's enough for two, and you're welcome to your share.

NED (*overcome*)

It's been so long since I've received an invitation to be a guest beneath the roof of respectability that you've stumped me. Blessings come to us from where we least expect them.

TOM

Then, you'll stay?

NED

No, I can't. Don't think me churlish, but I must move on away from here while I'm sober enough to know what I'm about. But I'll take with me the kindness that you've shown me; it will help me over the rough places. (*TOM tries to speak.*) No, don't try to stop me. I won't wait for the shoes to be mended; I'll just put them on and get away now.

TOM

Well, I'm sorry you won't stay, but remember, the latchstring is always out for you.

(*NED goes to the chair where he had been sitting and begins to put on the shoes, which he has picked up while talking to TOM. The latter resumes his work.*)

*Rose (returning; she is sad and shows that she has been crying)*

Mr. Flint, if the shoes are ready, I will take them with me.

TOM

Here they are—as good a pair of copper toes as ever youngster kicked in. (*He hands the shoes to her.*) Why, Miss Rose, what's happened to take all the smiles and dimples out of your pretty face? If any of those sassy fellows that have nothing else to do but stand around eying every pretty girl they see have been rude to you—why—

ROSE

Oh, no, it isn't that; it's only—(*She breaks down.*) Oh, Mr. Flint, Jim's been drafted! And if he does not find a substitute, he'll be mustered in and sent away to war next week!

TOM

Well, I'll be darned!

ROSE

And only to think—next week we were to have been married! Jim has worked so hard to save his money; our home was ready—all so pretty, and now perhaps he is going away to be killed and I shall never see him again!

## THE SMART SET

TOM

Now, never mind, Miss Rose. Perhaps when you see him he'll be able to tell you he's fixed things all right. Dry your pretty eyes, Miss Rose, you know he's not gone yet.

ROSE

Ah, but it will not be long before he is. Don't think me foolish. I'm proud of my Jim, as he says he knows I will be. He knows I will be brave, just as a soldier's sweetheart should be, and if he doesn't return— Oh, I just can't bear it!

JIM (*calling outside*)

Rose! Rose!

ROSE (*giving a little scream and running to him as he enters, sobbing. Ned puts on his hat, pulling it well over his eyes.*)

Oh, Jim, Jim! You mustn't leave me!

JIM (*fondling her*)

There, there, Rosebud mine! (*He holds her face between his hands.*) Bless your sweet face, it looks like a flower that has been out in the rain.

ROSE

Have you any news, Jim?

JIM

Only that I've got to go, dear. You see, men are wanted to defend our flag, and—

ROSE

Then, get someone to fill your place.

JIM

Listen, dear; our boys down here, those that are left, are needed in their homes. Besides, I can't spare the money for a substitute, if I could get one.

ROSE

And what about our wedding, Jim?

JIM (*trying to laugh*)

We'll put that off until I come back, and then perhaps you'll marry a colonel, instead of a plain farmer.

ROSE

But if you shouldn't ever come back?

JIM (*gently*)

Then you'll care for the old place, dear, and be glad that I didn't shirk my duty.

ROSE (*sobbing*)

Oh, I know I ought to be ashamed of myself, when you are so brave; but—if you didn't have to go—

NED (*coming down*)

He doesn't.

ROSE, JIM AND TOM

What!

NED

I'm going in his place.

TOM

God bless him!

JIM (*at the sound of Ned's voice, starting toward him*)

Ned—you—

NED (*giving him a quick look to stop him*)  
Yes, Ned, your old chum and friend.

JIM

Friend!

NED

Yes, until I forfeited the right even to that name.

ROSE

Then you knew my Jim?

NED (*impulsively*)

Know him! Why— (*Recovering himself*)—yes, we were once chums together.

ROSE

But Jim says he hasn't the money to pay a substitute.

NED

Miss Rose, appearances are sometimes deceptive, and though my apparel is—well, disordered, it does not follow that I am in need of money.

ROSE

But, still, this morning—

NED

Yes, I know what you would say: I was hungry when you first made my acquaintance. True. It was but an idle conceit of an idle fellow, who has tasted of all the follies of the world, to live for a while the life of a tramp, just to satisfy himself there are still good people to be met with.

**ROSE**  
But why do you accept the position?

**NED**

Because—I want to fight for my country. The battle so far has been a selfish one, and a failure at that.

**ROSE**

How good you are! (*She takes his hand.*)

**NED** (*choking up*)

Don't say that, Miss Rose. I'm *not* good. It was a hard, selfish man to whom you brought the sunshine of your presence this morning.

**ROSE**

A power I can't explain brought me to where you were resting by the roadside. It was just as if my Jim was there, and I felt I *had* to speak to you.

**NED**

It was a voice from Heaven.

**JIM**

But I can't let you take my place; I should feel like a coward.

**NED**

You must, boy. It's my one chance to do what's right.

**JIM**

But if anything happened to you—I should feel—

**NED**

You would feel proud to know that, after all, I had fought a good fight.

**ROSE**

But I don't understand.

**NED**

How should you? Let me try to tell you. Miss Rose, there were two brothers not so many years ago, who were brought up side by side by a fond mother. The elder of the two tried for a while to be a protector to the younger, for he loved him; but in their college days, while the elder brother gave himself up to dissipation and vice, which finally ended in his dismissal by the faculty, the younger proved himself a man by toiling to educate himself and

coming out with honor. Once he put out his hand to save his brother, and was cursed for his pains. Threatened by his debts, this brother even forgot what he owed the old folks who had reared him, and committed forgeries in their name and but for the younger one they might have been turned out of the old homestead—to go God knows where!

**ROSE**

And this elder brother, does he know—

**NED**

Yes. The voice of love has called to him and waked him from his dream of self. The time has come for him to redeem his past—

**JIM** (*springing forward*)

Ned!

**NED**

—to prove by his deeds that he has earned the right to take his brother by the hand and say, "God bless you!"

**ROSE**

Then, you are—

**JIM**

He is—

**NED** (*stopping him*)

Only a tramp—but I mean to be a man. I'm off to the city to take Jim's place in the ranks. If God spares me I'll come back to tell your children the story of Jim and me, and prove what love universal and infinite can do for even the lowest of mankind. (*He starts up to the door. The music, which has been played low from the beginning of NED's story, now gradually swells.*)

**JIM** (*starting toward the door, as ROSE goes to the window*)

God go with you!

**NED** (*at the door, putting on his hat with a swing*)

Good-bye. (*He goes out. JIM goes to the window. ROSE waves her hand-kerchief. TOM goes to the door and throws an old shoe after him.*)

CURTAIN

# W O M A N

By TERRELL LOVE HOLLIDAY

**S**HE cometh into the world with nothing to wear, and continueth so; and complaineth all the days of her life because thereof.

In her infancy she admireth the pinkness of her cheeks in the mirror, and resolveth that they shall never grow less pink. And, lo, they never do!

In her childhood she demandeth mock babies, yea, many scores of them. With these she playeth until upon her cometh a weariness so great that she cannot bear one baby that is real.

In the days of her girlhood she worshipeth matinee idols. And hath measles and dreams. Puppy love biteth her soft heart many times, and high school boys her soft neck a few times—if her head be like her neck.

In the days of her young womanhood she loveth all men, and wisely, for they are foolish and much may be got out of them. A few she loveth too well for their own good. These she marryeth.

Ere the day cometh when she acknowledgeth the designation “middle-aged matron,” she hath accumulated a fortune by matrimony.

And she tireth of the chase for the latest thing in husbands, deciding rather to let bad enough alone—for he might be worse.

And she goeth in for charity, yea, with both feet, and danceth all night at a charity ball.

And, lo, on the morning thereafter, Opportunity, disguised as a poor widow with nineteen starving children, knocketh. And the maid dareth not to awaken her mistress, who at that hour taketh her beauty sleep.

She organizeth mothers' clubs to teach the female of the slums how to care for its young. She hath deep knowledge of the subject, having no young of her own to upset the theories which she deriveth from books written by the wise virgins who know all things appertaining thereto.

She fighteth Father Time with beauty doctors, and growtheth old slowly—but at last. She taketh gout in her feet and bridge fever in her head, and never recovereth therefrom.

“*Requiescat in pace*” we would say, for we were among those whom she loved and married; but for a bridge fiend there is no hope.



## M A S Q U É

By CORA A. MATSON DOLSON

**S**HAKES hands and part, since 'tis agreed to part,  
And to do less might savor of regret;  
But have a care, oh, my rebellious heart,  
Or you may break, and, breaking, shame me yet!

# AQUATIC SPORTS AT VAN'S

By RICHARD ELY DANIELSON

BILLY DEFREES told me this story as we sat in the smoking room of a P. & O. liner, in illustration of his views on the good old subject, "You never can tell." He said: "I thought I was a fair judge of men and women, but those aquatic sports at Van's—Van Dyne's, you know—they showed me that, when it came to women, anyhow, I was a babe in arms. Though, for that matter," he chuckled, "her husband was more blind than I."

"Tell me about it," said I. "I've heard no end of rumors about the affair, but nothing authentic."

"Well," he said slowly, "by this time I don't know that it will do any harm to tell you the whole story."

And here, as nearly as I can reproduce Billy's vernacular—and I am fairly well acquainted with his prose style—is the epic of that famous occasion.

I've told the story hundreds of times, with not unmerited applause, but never before have I revealed the true inwardness of the happenings of that night. For more was meant than met the eye, unless old Van saw it, too. He is awfully wise. You see, it all happened at his place, and the plot all hangs about Joe Westfield and Mr. and Mrs. Sears Thorpe.

Van had a place on Long Island then, a big place—horses and dogs, you know—lots of horses. On the place was one of those Long Island lakes that stretched almost to the drive in front of the house. And on the other side of the house, the dunes and the ocean. A great place altogether, and a perfectly corking place for week-end parties. Van and

his wife—they're the salt of the earth, notwithstanding his being so wise—used to ask us down, and we used to ask ourselves down all the time. You see, Van was the first of our crowd in college to get married, and so we—Tommy Borden, Bob Davis, Joe Westfield, Sears Thorpe and I—made him buck up and play the genial host.

Some months after Sears Thorpe got married in his turn, Van asked him and his wife down for a visit, and he also asked Tommy Borden and me to come and amuse a young cousin of his named Marjorie Wales—a hundred per cent girl. Then Bob Davis said he thought he would come, too, and West—that's Westfield, you know—announced that, being a native of those parts, he couldn't make a visit, but he would come to dine. It made a very pretty gathering of the Old Guard. And so, as soon as we got there, we shipped the two wives and the young cousin upstairs and then spent the afternoon in a big dope talk. We always do when we get together. There's so much to talk over.

Tommy Borden was just back from one of his shooting trips, and in his best form, which is saying a lot. He stands four feet nine, you know—a jolly good cox in college till he developed a paunch and went up to a hundred and twenty-five. He used to sneak away from Gales Ferry and tuck food in New London. And he always made Stroke laugh. I was Stroke.

He told several whacking stories about being treed by a bear, and we told him he was a portly liar. And then, somehow, we got to chaffing Van and Sears. We said they were sad and sober married men while we were gay

young bloods. It seemed a bit ignoble to rub it in. I thought, too, that Sears winced when we told him he was respectable, and I was sorry.

He said: "You know, it's wonderful, being married, and all that. But you can't help missing the excitement of things and the lack of responsibility. Very few women can join in a sporting proposition, for instance. They haven't that sort of spirit. It doesn't appeal to them."

I thought this rather disloyal from a six months' husband. I like to see married people keep up the bluff.

Sears went on: "I often think I'd like to slip into old corduroys and take the road to Nowhere with three or four of you people."

And then, of course, we all recalled old trips together and told anecdotes—fights, leavetakings, little dinners, nights of adventure and nights under the stars, and the thousand little things that are good to remember.

Old Van didn't say very much. He never does. But he blinked through his smoke and grinned. He is awfully wise. Sears got up and stalked around the room. The fret was on him, and I was sorry.

For my sister had taken occasion to tell me—her maid had told her, and she had a gentleman friend who was a cousin of the Thorpes' maid—that the Thorpes weren't happy together, that Sears was neglecting his wife, like that picture, "For He's a Jolly Good Fellow." And of course I went off the handle at that and told her it was a damn lie. And she said that gentlemen didn't swear at ladies. And I said I hadn't sworn at her, and we parted with mutual unregrets. That was all I had heard. I could understand pretty well how Sears felt, but I was sorry he showed it.

You see, Thorpe was a very clever man, a brilliant man. He and Bob Davis were the two most brilliant men in college, quite different from the rest of us. Davis could do anything at all, from playing poker to writing poems—he's writing awfully well now, you know—and Thorpe was like him. I used to

let them rail and jeer at me ordinarily, only squashing them when they got too umbrageous. For Sears's disposition in particular was strange. You could never tell what he was going to do next, or how what you did or said would affect him. It made us a bit afraid of him, this uncertainty. He might be gay or sensitive or in one of his savage tempers.

When he was married—I was his best man—I never saw two people so entirely different. I didn't like her at first; I seldom do like my old friends' new wives. She was so demure and quiet, so dove-colored, if you know what I mean, that when I saw her first at the wedding rehearsal I couldn't help thinking: "How in the world do you and Sears hit it off?" She dressed well, but very quietly—what you would call an old-fashioned girl. And there was Sears, with the fire in his eye and the eagerness in his face, quick, careless, daring. I thought it was not unlike him to fall in love with his opposite, but I wondered how long it would last.

She said to me then: "You're one of Sears's best friends, and I'm ever so glad to know you."

And I said: "You have certainly got a corker!" I find that I usually congratulate a friend's wife as I would a successful pickpocket on his *coup*.

And she said: "I know that, but as long as he thinks I'm a corker, too—" when some busybody came up, and she never finished the sentence.

Well, after we had dressed for dinner—at Van's—we were sitting with the ladies, about cocktail time. Tommy was doing some speedy work with the hundred per cent cousin on the window seat, and the rest of us were simply gassing away. Bob Davis said to Mrs. Van:

"Mrs. Van, what's your golden rule for holding the affections of your spouse—if you don't mind my asking? He seems to be the complete husband."

Mrs. Van—she is awfully pretty—sparkled at the Wise One, who grinned back, and she said:

"Oh, I have him ask all his nice friends here for parties, and then I flirt

with them all and keep him guessing. A wife should always keep her husband guessing."

Sears cut in: "Well, that ought to work both ways. A safe course for husbands!" And he ran to the window seat, lifted Tommy up and planted himself by the Hundred Percenter. Whereupon Tommy straightened himself, waved his arm, announcing, "The home wrecker advances!" and planted himself by Mrs. Van. I moved over by Mrs. Thorpe, and what Tommy called "our modern *ménage*" was complete, the wise Van Dyne grinning and fussing around in the rear.

"If that ass, Westfield, would only come," he said, "we could begin dinner."

"Let's not wait any longer for Dr. Westfield," said Mrs. Van. "He is always late." And so we all went in to dinner.

Now this man Westfield plays such an important part in this story that you should know as much of him as mere cold words can express. A man of infinite humor and an unforgettable face. A mine of chuckling philosophy, and the possessor of the original pie-faced smile. It begins at one ear and reaches the other, but almost instantly assumes the likeness of a sector of apple. Tommy said it always made him think of Thanksgiving and six kinds of pie—crude surfeit was what spoiled a good coxswain in the Borden family. Perhaps it is this smile that makes old West equally beloved by clam digger and dowager down on Long Island, for his visits—he is by way of being a doctor—are more confessional than professional. His worst point is a mistaken habit of introducing advertisements among friends. He is always late for engagements, to show the extent of his practice. A most annoying habit.

Dinner was very gay. I've never seen Thorpe any more attentive than he was with the Hundred Percenter. Taking his cue from Mrs. Van's remark, he cooed and billed and ogled and whispered most disgustingly. And she answered up and cooed and billed and ogled back—a hundred per cent girl!

I sat by Mrs. Thorpe, and she was as quiet and self-controlled as ever, and yet there was a sort of electric wave in the air. I became queerly aware that the thing was not a joke to her. Perhaps it was the memory of my sister's silly maid, or something else, but, anyhow, I sensed, as even the dullest of us will sometimes, that right beside me a small, intimate tragedy was being acted, that, for all her calm, unruffled manner, her heart was beating fast.

We talked the usual abject rot. I asked her if she liked golf, and had been much to the Opera last season; and she returned in kind. She had spent two or three years in England, and I wanted to ask her about the hunting. I thought, however, that the only thing she had done in England was to acquire reserve. We warmed up a bit in a discussion over a friend of mine called the Great American Goat, I holding that he wore a nineteen collar, and she a seventeen. It was like her, I thought, to be conservative. Perhaps I thawed a trifle—I usually do, dining at Van's—but toward the end of the meal I turned to her and said:

"Sears is rather umbrageous, isn't he?"

She drew her breath quickly. "Yes, he is," she said.

"Have you ever tried Mrs. Van's method?" I asked; and now that I think of it, it was a pretty impertinent thing to say.

She looked at me sharply, then paused and thought.

"No-o," she said slowly. "I wonder if it's a good one?"

"I don't know," said I, "but let's try."

She looked at me again, and suddenly I saw come into her eyes something that I never expected to see there—a gleam of pure devilment, and at the same time of the finest sporting spirit—if you know what I mean.

"Very well," she said, "let's!"

I couldn't have been more surprised if my own grandmother—to take an extreme case—had called for a stein of Pilsener. And yet at the same moment I wanted to bow down and apologize

and worship. For here was a woman I had condemned as dove-colored and spiritless, fighting for her happiness—for everything—and doing it with a gleam in her eye and a smile on her lips. When you realize how desperately easy it is for people to cease being actual comrades when the strangeness and bloom of the thing have worn off, and when you think what it must mean to a woman when her husband forgets to kiss her good morning, then perhaps you can understand what Mrs. Thorpe was facing at that moment, smiling and playing the game. And perhaps you would have bowed low to her as I did, and said: "I am your servant."

Then we grew umbrageous, too. I had expected at first to carry off the affair myself, but she managed the whole thing, rallying me, giving me openings, blushing and laughing, teasing me, calling me "Billy" till I almost fancied that I was a real fascinator. A very great actress was lost to the world when she married Thorpe. As for him—I saw him look up surprised, listen for a moment, lose the thread of his pretty speeches and then stare stupidly at his wife. He was nettled and surprised, and puzzled, too. And the first time that a proud, possessive man is puzzled by his wife, he is very much annoyed. Sears's jaw tightened, and a bit of color came out on his cheeks, and then he turned to the Hundred Percenter, more umbrageous than ever. I think that Van, blinking through his spectacles, saw the whole thing. He is awfully wise.

Mrs. Van said: "I think that it's perfectly disgraceful that Dr. Westfield shouldn't come or send some sort of an excuse."

"Oh, his face is only in keeping with dessert," said Tommy. "It would be premature before."

"It's extremely bad taste on his part," said Davis, with one of his nice, old-fashioned bows.

"And anyhow," said Mrs. Van—women are single-minded—"he ought to come."

But there was no sign of the pie-faced one, and after a while the ladies left us

and we smoked together. Sears was silent, and I saw that in his puzzlement he didn't know quite how to act. It was a toss-up between moods, either the morose or the devil-may-care. But when we rose to join the ladies, his jaw tightened again, and I saw that the devil-may-care had won. A bad man to cross in that mood—careless of everything, quite ready to shake dice with Destiny. I think he must have had wild Irish in him somewhere.

He stood in front of the low windows that face the lake and looked out into the moonlight. Then he turned to the ladies.

"What I like to see," he said, "is good sporting spirit. Miss Wales, will you let me row you around on the lake? It's a lovely night."

"How nice of you!" she said, much flattered. "Of course I will."

"Billy," said Mrs. Thorpe to me, "you haven't forgotten that you invited me to go walking with you, have you?"

"Rather not!" I answered. "I'm going now for your coat, if you like."

"You'll find it very damp walking," said Thorpe to his wife in a deuced conjugal tone of voice.

"The lake," she said, "is rather damp," and she pouted at him as I held her polo coat. From the expression on his face I am quite sure that she had never pouted at him before.

And so, while Sears and the Hundred Percenter made for the boathouse, Mrs. Thorpe and I wandered out after them on the lawn. The rest of the party stood on a little gallery effect and shouted farewells at us. It was a lovely night. There was a great round moon, a hunter's, or harvest, or something moon, shining over the nicely clipped lawns. The air was sweet with the smell of the dew on the grass and flowers. And there was a hint of salt in the air, too, from the surf pounding away on the other side of the dunes.

On the lawn was a long hose attached to a whirligig thing by way of sprinkler. We were walking across the grass when Mrs. Thorpe's eye fell on this thing, whirling like six o'clock, and suddenly

she said: "I'd like to turn the water on Sears and the Young Person!" It struck me as a splendid idea, and together we raced to the tap and turned the water off. Then I unscrewed the whirligig, rushed to the tap and turned the water on again. It was a fine, full stream. Just as we were experimenting to see how far the thing would carry, if it would reach the boathouse where Sears was slamming around in the boats, we saw the lights of a motor afar off, rounding into the drive. And just about then things began to happen.

Someone shouted from the house: "It's Joe Westfield! Turn it on him!"

I think we were all a little mad that night. I know I chuckled loudly, and Mrs. Thorpe was laughing with a catch in her throat as we waited for Joe at the turn. I held the hose, but Mrs. Thorpe held the nozzle. As the motor slowed at the last turn, we caught it full, and held the stream right on the driver until he had passed us, slowed and stopped. Tommy said afterwards that he looked like the *Maid of the Mist* going under Niagara Falls. And when the car had stopped, I saw that it was not Joe's car at all; his is a squirty little runabout, and this was a very grand affair.

"It's not Joe's car!" I hissed to Mrs. Thorpe.

"Good heavens!" she gasped.

In the horror of that moment the scene whirled around me. And then, aching with guilty laughter, we fled into the shadows.

The calamity of an unprovoked assault on an innocent stranger was forgiven us. It was the right man, after all. I saw that, as soon as we stopped and looked around. Westfield was advancing, bowlegged, very wet and wroth, upon the offending hose. The strange motor remained a mystery. I roared, hee-hawing like a jackass; I could not help it, facing even the ignominy of a pie-faced destruction. I had no words in my mouth, only laughter. But Mrs. Thorpe—oh, how I had misjudged her! A silvery voice rose from beside me. "Oh, what a shame,

Dr. Westfield! It was awfully mean of them to do it!"

"Who? Who did it?" clamored the Pie.

"Why, Sears and Miss Wales. And then they ran to the boathouse. They're escaping in a boat now."

And as Joe with loud cries of rage lumbered toward the boathouse, I think we fell upon each other's necks and sobbed.

Now it so happened that Sears had been busy with the boat, finding his oars and getting the boat into the water, and Miss Wales had been busy with him, and if you will believe it, neither of them had heard a thing of what happened only fifty yards away. They knew, of course, that a motor was arriving, but their minds were baby innocent of such a Freshman thing as water throwing. So, by the time Joe reached the shore, they were well out on the lake, Sears paddling with slow strokes and commenting on the moon.

"Hello, Joe!" we heard him call cheerily.

"Hello! I want to see you!" roared the dripping Westfield.

"Sorry, I'm busy now. See you later," Thorpe called, and the next moment he actually began to yodel. I could almost hear Joe's teeth grind.

He came back to us filled with wrath and chuckles.

"Who would expect a grown man to do such an asinine thing as that?" he said.

"Oh, it was abominable," said Mrs. Thorpe. "You must be awfully wet, you poor man." I have never seen anything prettier than her sympathy. "I'm thoroughly annoyed with Sears," she went on. "You ought to punish him somehow for this."

"Oh, I will, all right!" he said, and set off searching the means of revenge.

Just then the whole party came down from the gallery, bringing Beans, the bull terrier, with them, all muffled up and eager to see the thing through. I had time to explain to them hurriedly how matters stood. "He thinks Sears did it," said I. A sigh of great content and hope went around the circle. I

was formulating a few generalities on how the gods assist any comedy of errors, and how blind and erring man rushes on his fate, when Joe returned, waving a wet and discouraged hand.

"I've tried to stretch that hose to the lake," he said, "but it only goes to the drive."

"There's another length by the house," said Mrs. Van, with a kind of gurgle. "You might join them together."

Van ran to get it, and Tommy and Bob plied the wretched Westfield with sympathy and jests. He bore it bravely—I will say that for him. And when Van came back with the new hose, he rose to Napoleonic proportions. He turned the water off, joined the two sections together and carried the nozzle down to the lake. Van turned the water on.

"Is she coming?" he called.

"Right-o!" called back Joe from the nozzle. He chuckled loudly at his own cleverness. "I shall put the end of the hose in or under the water to stop its noise," he said, "and when Sears comes back we shall see what we shall see." He kept on chuckling. The boathouse was a long thing like a pergola, with a little water gate that let the boats in under the flooring. We sat there on benches and things and waited for whatever the gods might send.

"I ought to apologize for missing dinner," said Joe to Mrs. Van, "but my machine broke down, out in the country, and I had to borrow another."

"Oh," said I, incautiously, "that explains it. We were afraid at first—" A small foot touched mine in the darkness.

"We were afraid at first," said Mrs. Thorpe, "that Sears had turned the water on the wrong man. I fancy he thought so, too, from the way he ran."

"Haw, haw!" went Van. His wife was silent owing to her handkerchief as gag. Tommy and I had learned in Sophomore year to "remove that smile," but Mrs. Thorpe learned her duplicity straight from Mother Eve.

In the half-hour that followed, Westfield made the most miserable exhibi-

tion of himself. He was all aglow with the brilliancy of his own mind and the splendor of his approaching revenge. At Tommy's suggestion of a spot light, he even brought down the borrowed motor over the lawn, so that its lights should throw the whole scene into strong relief. And, of course, we all egged him on. He said that he didn't see how an intelligent man could do such an imbecile thing in cold blood as to hold a hose on an unsuspecting friend. And we said we couldn't understand it, either; that it was a shameful and loathsome deed. But when he thought of how complete and perfect his retaliation would be, he became a human chuckle, wholly fatuous. Out on the lake we could hear Sears singing. We hailed him, but he refused to row back, which did not in the least surprise Westfield. The suspense became unendurable; the climax was delayed. At last Tommy and Van manned a little wedge-shaped punt, and with one oar, set out on a piratical voyage to capture the truants.

They were quite successful. A dash and a quick skirmish secured the painter, and then they towed back the two sentimentalists. The grand moment, the sublime second of Westfield's life, was at hand. As the bow of Sears's boat scraped on the sand, Sears—with how innocent a mind—stepped out, saying pleasantly: "It's very beautiful out there on the lake."

Westfield's face was bisected from ear to ear.

"Yes, isn't it?" he said. And standing two feet from Sears, he lifted up the hose, which was playing merrily. The stream struck Sears's shirt front like a volley of buckshot. His mouth fell open. The water filled it. He stood there tranced, his mind a chaos, while Joe leisurely played him up and down as a coachman washes a wagon. Then, with an inarticulate cry of rage, he fell upon the Pie Face.

Much of what followed was to me hazy, like actions in a dream. I saw dimly how the struggling pair knocked down Bob Davis, a harmless spectator. I saw, too, how Beans, the bull terrier,

seeing that there was trouble in the air, seized Tommy Borden by the leg; how the Hundred Percenter floated unnoticed from the shore, wailing dismally that she was soaked, and would someone please rescue her. All these things were vague because I was supporting a column, an ivy tendril wreathing my aching brow. But when the whole party concentrated their attentions on separating the two chief stragglers, Mrs. Thorpe and I, with simultaneous instinct, trotted heavily away. We ran to the top of the dunes, flung ourselves down in the grass and sobbed in the round face of the innocent moon.

How long we lay there before we were able to return and present an alibi, I do not know. But when we reached the house, a big fire had been lit, Tommy had mixed hot toddys and everyone was busy drying out and talking. We stayed in the background and watched the smoke of battle eddying in the air.

Sears regarded Joe more in pity than anger. "What I can't see," he said, "is how an old friend, one whom I liked and even respected, could in cold blood do a thing so wholly and completely asinine. Good heavens, why did you do it?"

"Can't you guess why?" retorted Westfield, whose chuckles were not in the least impeded by his fresh black eye.

The Hundred Percenter kept on, telling everyone how she had taken off her slippers, the boat was so wet, and Mr. Thorpe had put them in his pocket, and so she couldn't get ashore, and everyone had forgotten about her, and so on and so on.

Sears spluttered at West: "Well—wh-why did you do it? You didn't think it was funny, did you? Tell me, you didn't think it was funny!"

"Didn't you think it was funny, Sears?" asked the other, complete and perfect success filling his soul. I suppose no man was ever prouder of a night's work.

"Oh, Sears," put in Mrs. Thorpe, "of course it was funny! You would think it was funny if you had done it yourself!"

He looked at her with infinite sadness and scorn.

"Good Lord, Minna," he said, "leave me one ideal! Would you think it funny if, when you come home after a visit in town, I should lean out of the second story window and pour a barrel of paint over you, shouting, 'Ha, ha!'"

"Oh, come, Sears," said Joe; "you know you thought you were pretty funny when you did it."

"When I did what?"

"Oh, you know well enough what you did."

"I don't know."

"Well, try to remember by morning. Good night, Mrs. Van; I've got to go and make some calls. This has been a very pleasant evening." And he made his farewells, waving his hand to Sears and repeating with great appreciation: "Try to remember, Sears!"

After he had gone, Sears said: "That's the saddest thing I have ever seen. Mine own familiar friend gone clean off his head. I don't mind his wetting me so much; it's his being in this horrible condition. He actually thought it was funny. He must be overworked or something."

"I think we all owe you an apology and an explanation," said Mrs. Van, "only the joke is really on Joe. You see, he was sprinkled when he came, and then he thought that you had done it, and this was his revenge."

"I!" said Sears. "He thought I sprinkled him! Do I go about sprinkling people? Has he ever known me to sprinkle anyone?"

"No!" we all shouted, as we rocked and swayed with emotion. Sears's eye wandered dangerously around the room seeking the culprit. But Mrs. Van—a wonderful woman—caught up the round-eyed Hundred Percenter. "Good heavens, child," she said, "you're wet through! Come upstairs this minute and put on dry things. Jack, get these men dried off." And as she chivvied the Hundred Percenter upstairs, the Wise One removed Tommy and Bob. I thought I would stay to help my running mate through her ordeal. I didn't in the least know what Sears

would do or say or feel, and I was prepared to run away in case it developed into a scene.

He glowered from the fire. "Who was responsible for this thing?" he said. "Tommy, of course!"

"No," said I. It was the first time that I had ever figured more prominently than Tommy, and I was proud of it.

"It couldn't have been Bob or Van; was it you?"

"Partly," I said.

"But who engineered it—who was behind it all?"

I started to explain that when the gods get busy and take things into their own hands—when Mrs. Sears Thorpe said very quietly: "I suppose it was I, Sears."

"You!" said Sears. He stared at her uncomprehending, like that watcher of the skies when the new planet was swimming into his ken.

"Yes, Sears," said his wife. She was smiling quietly now, as silent and demure and dove-colored as ever.

Slowly over the incomprehension in his face began to come a great light. I

don't know whether he had begun to think of her as dove-colored, too, but I am sure that he never realized that she was a heaven-ordained leader of escapades, that her sporting spirit was one thousand per cent. "Women don't go in for that sort of thing; it doesn't interest them"—and I've noticed that men like girls to be "good home bodies" rather more when they are engaged than they do after they have been married for some time and domesticity has begun to pall. Myself, I am quite ready to believe that Mrs. Thorpe had deliberately kept this side of her character in reserve against possible need. A most extraordinary woman! Eve must have whispered in her infant ear, and Lilith been her godmother. As Sears's incomprehension faded, we stood there silent, she facing him and smiling. A great admiration came into his eyes and, as I had done, he bowed to his superior. And with the admiration, a sort of surprised joy. Then he, too, began to smile, tenderly and with understanding. I loved him for that smile.

"You're a wonder!" he said.



## PREPARATION

By HELEN HAMILTON DUDLEY

**F**RRIEND, what guest preparest thou for  
Within thy house this night?  
Thy chambers are all sweet with musk,  
Thy halls aglow with light—  
'Tis for some loved, expected guest  
Thy lamps shine through the dusk!

Ay, get thy house in readiness,  
Purge it of dust and gloom, 'tis best,  
For in the night, when lights are dim,  
May come the unexpected Guest  
Who in the morn when He departs  
May bear thee off with Him.

# LIFE

By ERNESTINE PATSIE VAUGHAN

**O**NCE upon a time a king's palace stood on a high cliff overlooking the sea. It had been there for hundreds of years, and its crumbling gray stone walls were overgrown with trailing ivy, in which countless song birds made merry the whole summer through.

On one side of the palace a picturesque old garden ran down to the edge of the cliff, where it was inclosed by a marble terrace. I think you might have searched the world over without finding another such garden as this—and certainly it was the very antithesis of what kings' gardens usually are. It was not arranged in stiff geometrical patterns of carefully chosen flowers harmoniously blended; the flowers here were quaint and old-fashioned and they grew in a haphazard, unconventional sort of way that was not wholly without charm.

Black-eyed susans and dainty marguerites sprang up alongside the sunny southern wall, and in the furthest corner a wild rose bush flaunted its winsome beauty and showered its delicate pink petals upon the soft, luxuriant grass. Great clusters of rosemary and fennel and lavender rioted in every nook and cranny, making the air heavy with cloying sweetness, and here and there patches of red meadow clover were bursting into bloom. A scarlet passion flower vine clambered over one side of the terrace, a dark splotch against its whiteness. There were beds of bright-hued pansies and pale tea roses and red and yellow tulips, and in spring crocuses and daffodils.

Over to the right of the garden, flanked by tall sentinel hollyhocks that screened it from view, was a deeply

sunken fountain, in the center of which stood the graceful nude figure of a dryad, dripping water from her finger tips. Lilies, pink and white, floated on its placid surface, their stems extending far down into the cool, translucent depths.

On the left of the garden there were rows and rows of linden trees and ragged unkempt hedges, affording a pleasant shady retreat; marble statues, stained and weather worn and mellow, gleamed half hidden amid the tangled growth of shrubbery. Here, imbedded in the soft, springy turf, nestled dainty anemones, violets, forget-me-nots and other shy woodland blossoms.

Take it all in all, it was a pretty garden, and though I can't explain why, its attraction was irresistible. In its elusive Old World charm there lurked a subtle enchantment. It fired the imagination; it evoked wondrous poetic fancies. You could not look upon it without experiencing a strange thrill of emotion; it brought back all the ardent hopes, all the brilliant aspirations of youth, and made them seem real for a time. It was a dream garden—a garden in which one saw perfected ideals and found truth and beauty. It spoke to everyone, and to each in a different language. Perhaps that was the secret of its fascination.

But the story I am going to tell is about a White Rose that grew in the king's garden beside the sunken fountain. I don't know how it came to be there; certainly it looked out of place among its homelier sisters. Caressed by the warm sunshine and fed by the gentle dew, it acquired a surpassing loveliness. Its petals were soft and

glowing; in every delicate fiber pulsed the magic of eternal spring. The Rose found it a never ending delight to breathe the perfumed air—to see the sun rise, to see it set—to see the pale moon glinting through the tree tops, to see it dim and die at the first faint flush of morning. Mere existence was a joy; it sufficed to be in the glad, glorious world; the White Rose asked nothing more.

But after a time, as was inevitable, the Rose became discontented. Each day, as it looked out upon the gay, careless court from its secluded bower, a strange restlessness filled its soul. Far down at the foot of a sheer dizzy height it could discern a shimmering blue jewel of a sea, with ships riding at anchor; some, with sails extended to the breeze, sped across the water, growing fainter and fainter until they passed out of sight. The White Rose wondered where they came from and where they were going. It longed for the wings of a bird, that it, too, might skim over that sparkling foam straight into the heart of the flaming red gold west and find what mysteries lay beyond.

"Ah, what a wonderful thing is life!" it sighed. "Ah, to be a part of it!"

One evening in the quiet dusk the King and Queen came strolling through the garden and paused beside the fountain. The Queen was a beautiful woman; the White Rose thought her the most beautiful woman it had ever seen, and worshiped her from afar. It had even dared once to brush against her gown as she passed by; the touch thrilled yet.

"I love this old garden," said the King.

"Yes?" The Queen's tone was lifeless. "It's gone to ruin."

"That's why I love it. I prefer it this way."

"You have frugal tastes."

"The exchequer is somewhat depleted."

"Indeed?"

The White Rose did not know what an exchequer was; it did not care very much. It was conscious of nothing but a supreme exultation in the Queen's

nearness. If only the Queen—the beautiful Queen—would deign to notice its humble self—would perhaps—

The Queen's eyes swept the flower beds listlessly and rested upon the White Rose.

"That is a pretty rose," she said.

The King's glance followed hers.

"Exquisite!" he exclaimed. He stooped and plucked the Rose and gave it to her.

"It is as fragrant and pure, dear—as you yourself," he said.

Neither he nor the White Rose knew why the Queen smiled so ironically just then. She held the flower indifferently for a moment and then fastened it in her hair.

The White Rose throbbed with ecstasy.

"At last!" it breathed. Life—the life for which it had yearned—seemed about to unfold before its glad eyes; it thanked whatever gods there be.

Hours later, when a pale silver crescent cut across the purple sky and stars burned dimly, the Queen stole into the garden—alone. But she did not remain alone. A Courtier joined her—a Courtier who kissed her hands.

"I love you," the Queen told the Courtier.

The man whom the Queen loved took her in his arms.

"And I adore you," he whispered.

Her lover! The White Rose drooped a little where it lay against the shining coils of her hair.

"I envy that rose," said the Courtier.

"And why?"

"Because it may kiss your hair."

"And so may you," murmured the Queen.

"In secret," he objected.

"I have said I would go away with you."

"And did not mean it."

"Perhaps not." She sighed.

The Courtier released the Rose from its confinement.

"Will you give this to me?" he asked.

"If you wish," assented the Queen, and she pinned it upon the lapel of his coat.

When the Queen had gone, the Cour-

tier quitted the garden and, crossing the courtyard, passed out through the palace gates. Quickly descending the mountain, he came to the outskirts of the town, and a few minutes sufficed to bring him into the heart of the city, where he vanished within the portals of a playhouse bearing the title "Villigenis."

A woman was singing when the Courtier entered. She did not have a good voice, but her body was beautiful. Nothing else mattered, of course. As soon as the woman left the stage the Courtier sought a side door, and hurrying down a dingy, ill lighted passage, arrived at her dressing room.

"You are late," said the Singer.

"The Queen detained me—"

"The Queen?"

"With her amours. She has taken quite a fancy to me. She gave me this rose."

"Fool! May I usurp a Queen's favor?" she asked laughingly.

"Assuredly." And he handed her the White Rose, which shuddered at her touch. "But I have something here I think you will like better."

He drew a necklace of pearls from his pocket and clasped it about her slender throat. The Singer gave a cry of delight, and the White Rose fell to the floor unnoticed.

"Will you join me in a bottle of

wine?" said the Courtier—and the two went out together.

A moment later the Singer's maid appeared and, noticing the White Rose, already half withered, she picked it up and threw it out upon the street. Passers-by trampled it heedlessly, and a drunken roisterer, caroling a vile tavern song, shoved it into the gutter. There, amid the foulest slime, the Rose cringed, bleeding and dying, as the night wore away.

In the cold gray dawn a Poet, returning from a round of voluptuous pleasure, saw the poor wilted Rose—the Rose that had once been white—and exclaimed: "A faded rose! I will write a poem on that. The rose shall be white, but in its heart I will have three drops of blood—ah, yes, three drops of blood! That will make it more poetic and mystical." And so saying, the Poet passed on, leaving his inspiration buried in the mire.

The Rose shivered as the chill east wind blew upon it, freezing its very soul. Its brief existence was almost over; it gasped pitifully at the realization. A streak of morning light shot athwart the sky, bathing the distant hilltops in a flood of glory.

"And this is the thing men call life!" said the White Rose with its dying breath.



**W**HOMO are the saddest men in the world?" asked the poet's son.

"The editors," answered Rondeau Rimer, with a soulful sigh. "They do nothing but regret from one rejection to another."



**A**PUBLIC service corporation is one which the public serves and pays well for the privilege of doing so.



**C**OMING home late is the mother of invention.

## T W O   R O S E S

By J. RAYMOND ELDERDICE

**B**LOSSOMED in May,  
Withered in June,  
Once bright and gay,  
Faded so soon.  
From all thy kind taken,  
By rude hands caressed,  
Thy soft petals shaken,  
Thy twin beauties pressed  
In the musty old pages  
Of some book of rhyme,  
Where thy scent engages  
The odors of time.  
Yet from thy resting place  
Faint perfumes rise,  
As birds from their nesting place  
Sing to the skies.  
As in thy life thou grew,  
With tendrils entwined,  
Thou, in thy prison new,  
Mingled we find.

So shall we, maiden,  
Greet life in its May,  
With our sweetness laden  
In its June fade away.  
Then, plucked by some sorrow,  
By Time's hand caressed,  
Shall we on the morrow  
In Life's book be pressed.  
Yet as the roses, though  
Withered in gloom,  
Yield from the pages so  
Sweet a perfume,  
Remembrance shall give us  
In our after-hours,  
A scent to outlive us,  
As from the pressed flowers.  
And when our life closes  
I pray they shall find  
Our hearts, as the roses,  
With tendrils entwined.

# THE TURN OF THE TIDE

By BLANCHE ADLER VAN BUREN

THE door of the carriage slammed and the sound fairly bit into the still night. Kate detested the modern thought dispelling taxi-auto, and avoided it with a vehemence and consistency which caused many to call her "fussy" and old-fashioned. Therefore, she regarded Burton with a mixture of approval and doubt as she settled back into the comfortable cushions of the coupé, but only the warmth and cordiality of her gaze were reflected in the tone with which she said:

"I might have known it!"

Kate Hollingworth was a handsome woman at thirty-five. She had never married, and everybody except one or two intimates was still wondering why. She belonged to that class of women who are as varied in their physical expression and beauty as they are in their Protean change of mood and fancy. Never two days alike, her face never failed to attract and charm, appealing at once to the artistic sense and to the imagination. No one ever noticed anything else. With her expressive eyes, she drew and concentrated all interest in her personality and not in her person, so that even some women, after leaving her, could not tell what gown she wore! And the strangest thing of all was that her women friends outnumbered her masculine admirers, and it was they who said, "How strange that Kate Hollingworth did not marry!" The ordinary man was rather afraid of her; she was far too clever for him, but alas, not clever enough to hide it. She never had desired an admiration nor a courtship won by conscious campaign, the usual feminine ruse. And

therefore she was a spinster—thirty-five and unmarried. Fortunately for herself, she had the power to be indifferent to masculine adulation. She had a small income, which she augmented by spasmodic successes with her drawings, for instead of doing lucrative hack work she could insist on trying her hand at the romantic school. These journeys into comparatively new fields artistic drained her savings and compelled her into harness again. Just now she was in funds. And in spite of her social standing and the unmistakable purity of her lineage, she was a true Bohemian in the best sense of the word.

That was why the winter found her in Paris. She had settled there because her small apartment, taken for a summer fancy, was both cheap and comfortable, and the intimacy and charm of her surroundings had made a home of what was only hired lodgings. And there was rich material for her work. Perhaps she might even try color oils; it was rather late to take up oils, but her black and white had given her such a thorough foundation. Plans that gave her back the enthusiasm of her youth were made and destroyed, and all the while autumn was merging into winter.

And now it was really winter. Through the cab windows the gas lamps gleamed steadily; the air was of a frosty clearness and the streets were quiet. Summer saunterers had disappeared and the moon shone no longer on love making couples wandering on the banks of the Seine or through the narrow, dimly lighted streets that fostered them.

Kate was glad of the long drive before them, and she caught herself wondering whether Burton was as glad. She was almost sure he was not. The evening had been a merry one, the dinner excellent, the hosts genial, the music scarce and of the best, and, finally, the departing guests speeded on their way by a stiff and old-fashioned egg-nogg prepared by the Southern Mrs. Semmes herself. Burton was a Chamber of Commerce man, and was combining business and pleasure in Paris with satisfactory results. But then—he had been there before.

His attentions to Kate Hollingworth had been attributed by that usually astute young woman as the preambles to a wide-margined flirtation.

"What is it that you might have known?" he asked.

"That you would have a coupé for me instead of a taxi."

"How could you know?"

"Because you heard me say once that I hated taxis."

"And you knew that I would remember? Be careful what you are saying, Miss Hollingworth!"

Burton turned his face to hers, and his tone expressed considerable curiosity and a hint of unspoken flatteries.

Kate laughed.

"Of course, as you are a *galant homme*, a 'man of the world,' you would make it a point to heed the wishes of women."

"Oho! So I am a 'man of the world,' am I? How did you find that out?"

"My dear Mr. Burton, nowadays every man is, or thinks he is."

"Do you think so? What do you call a 'man of the world'?"

She shrugged her shoulders.

"Do you really want to know? Do you realize that it is past twelve and yet you actually talk? Heavens! I'll begin to think I've made a mistake and set about changing my label."

"Well, you evidently haven't a flattering opinion of the 'man of the world.' And yet your voice sounded grateful for his thoughtfulness a moment ago."

"Oh, I don't deny his usefulness in society. He is an absolute necessity at times."

"Really, you have aroused my curiosity. Tell me your interpretation of that term."

"Well, if you insist, here goes."

She settled herself into the depths of the cushions and laughed a little. How many times she had lost a possible suitor by an injudicious telling of his weaknesses, which she unmercifully laid bare with a mischievous twinkle of the eye and a useless expenditure of epigram! The habit had grown upon her until no one was spared. She would test Burton. "To begin with, he is a man who knows no law but that of discretion, no self-denial but the one which will further a future indulgence. His heart is as stable as the smoke from his cigarette, and his conversation has all the solidity of champagne bubbles. His—"

Burton interrupted her with upraised hand.

"Pardon me—but if I thought you meant what you said, I'd—I—Do you remember that you almost asserted that I was a man of that caliber? Miss Hollingworth!"

He bent to her through the darkness. Silence answered him.

"Is this a society joke or are we talking seriously? My sense of humor seems to be on a protracted vacation tonight. You don't really think that, do you?"

She wondered if he was getting angry, and in moving forward to catch a glimpse of his face, her furs came undone and her jeweled handbag slipped to the floor of the carriage. He stooped to pick it up, and in giving it to her their hands met.

"Heavens! Your hands are like ice!" was his involuntary exclamation. "Let me warm them." And in the most natural way he took them into his own. Kate struggled at first, but finally let her fingers lie crushed in his warm palms. Every fiber in her body yearned with all a true woman's yearning to let herself love this man, who had grown so strangely dear to her in

these few weeks. But with all the strength of her nature, she held herself fearfully aloof, tremblingly waiting for the truth.

And she wished that the ride would never end and that he would not speak. Yet, womanlike, it was she who broke the troubling silence, and her voice had a false note of gaiety.

"Really, for a man of the world, you are playing the role of domestic comforter with great success. Thank you, I'll take my hands now."

And she tried to withdraw them.

For answer, he caught her roughly, almost cruelly to him.

"You don't mean it! You know I love you—I love you"—and before she could struggle his face had touched hers and he was kissing her eyes madly, passionately.

The suddenness of the move took her breath for a moment and the sweetness of his touch brought a delicious forgetfulness, but only for a moment. Quickly she wrenched herself from him and threw herself far back into the cushions, catching her furs with a trembling hand around her throat. For a while neither spoke, and then she said, very bitterly, "I might have known it."

Burton, who was straining his eyes to see her face in the gloom of the narrow street through which they were passing, found an unrecognizable voice with which he said again, "What do you mean?"

Kate clasped and wrung her hands, throwing them from her with a sharp gesture of pain.

"Ah, the same old story! I know it so well! The same old game—the counterfeit for the real."

"What do you mean? What game?"

She answered in a tired voice.

"My dear Mr. Burton, I shall have to remind you that I am not a young girl, that I have had experience. I know these scenes so well and have grown to dread them. Solitude à deux—intimacy of a closed cab—quiet night—lots of good things to eat—and principally to drink—and a consequent benevolent mood, to put it mildly—it's always alike."

Her voice trailed away drearily. She was suddenly very tired.

Burton said angrily, now thoroughly roused: "Do you mean that I am a cad?"

"Oh, no; you are just a man."

"I'm afraid I shall have to ask you to explain more fully. I confess I let my feelings get the better of me, but, good heavens, it's not a tragedy and you are making it one!"

Kate struck a fist against the palm of her hand.

"Yes, it is a tragedy," she said fiercely, "and you shall know why. I have never fully spoken out my mind to any man, preferring to let them all go unenlightened. I have kept to myself what every woman hides, but for once I feel that I must speak—the words are just crying their way out. Let me tell you this: you men play a dastardly game. You seek the gratification of momentary emotions—a mood carries you away—and you let yourselves go, never thinking for a second what suffering you are causing. I suppose it never occurred to you, when you are holding a trembling woman in your arms, a woman that you never care to see again after twenty-four hours have passed—that that woman is simply aching, dying to be loved—longing to feel the truth of a man's embrace, and not his sham. While she is in your arms, she is weeping in her heart, and if you cared to look you could see the tears in her eyes. Every nerve in her body is calling for real love. She has been waiting all her life for it; it has not come. Men do not know nor believe this. They see us dance and laugh and flirt, and they think we are pretty playthings, all of us, the riper, the easier to capture—ah, I know it all! They think we are frivolous, light, that they have only to venture and the game is won—and kisses are given like dainty favors. And meanwhile, we women are weeping.

"I, too, am one of those women—and life has offered me nothing but what you gave me—an empty shell—nothing—a moment's passion—" She broke off abruptly and clasped her hands

again, turning to the window through which she could not see. "God, what fools we women are!"—and her hands went to press her forehead tightly.

Burton bent forward to her and took her hand.

"And you think me one of these men?" His voice was very low.

"Why not?" In sheer physical weariness, she scarcely heeded his touch or the emotion in his tone, but continued: "They are all alike."

There was a long silence, and then Burton dropped her hand and spoke.

"For once, my dear Miss Hollingsworth, your vaunted experience of life and knowledge of men have played you false. For once, your intelligence which I admired so much is questionable. It pains me to have to tell you that you are very dense."

He paused and waited for comment from her, but she only looked toward him and said nothing.

"It has never occurred to you, perhaps, that you could be loved—really, truly loved?"

Receiving no answer, he continued in the same bantering tone.

"Maybe you do not know that under the thorny surface I see a most charming and lovely woman—that your voice is a delight to the ear—that you are entirely adorable and desirable. Ah, Kate, you have never been so human,

so thoroughly feminine as now! I thought you admirable, but a creature above weaknesses. Your outburst convinced me how truly you are a woman. And nobody has ever understood you before—don't you know that? You must know that I—I—your blasé man of the world—that I love you as devotedly as a man ever loved a woman—that my emotion was genuine. I want you to marry me, Kate; I want you with me always. Poor little bittersweet Kate!"

His arms were stretched toward her.

The cab rattled over the Pont de l'Alma, and the lights on the bridge, shining into the windows, showed him Kate's face, a growing wonder in her eyes. She held away from him. No one had ever called her "little" before, and yet—

"You mean it—that you really love me?"

He took her into his strong arms and held her hands to his lips in silence.

A lifetime of deception and disillusion was drowned from her memory in the flood of tears that her happiness drew from her. She was thirty-five—but then he was forty. And all men were not alike.

"By the way," said Burton, as the cab drew near its destination, "what is the rest of your definition of the 'man of the world?'"



## THE WHITE BIRCH

By JANE NORTHCOTT

DRESS thee in gossamer, oh, my tree,  
With an emerald robe blown out of the sea,  
And an amethyst veil to cover thee.

May dawn is with thee—she cannot stay  
But to fasten thy robe on her dancing way,  
Yet June shall bring thee thy perfect day.

Thy heart shall throb to the song of June;  
Thy veil shall be stirred by its passionate tune—  
A pulse of heat in a quivering noon!

# HER SUCCESS

By ALICE R. ALLAN

THE music room was a blinding glitter of electric light. It was evidently used merely as a work-room, as it was bare of furniture except for a few bookcases, two or three chairs and the grand piano in the corner. Sheets of music, some printed, some in manuscript, littered the rack and lay scattered about the floor in loose heaps. A woman sat before the piano, slowly picking out a melody with one listless finger. The notes followed, one after another, dully and reluctantly, scarcely breaking the dense silence.

Suddenly she straightened up with a jerk and played rapidly for a few moments. She stopped as quickly, pulled a fountain pen from the tangle of her black hair and hurriedly wrote a few bars on the pad lying in her lap. Then she looked at it reflectively, sighed, tore it across and threw it on the floor. She bent toward the watch that hung on the front of the piano, suspended by a hatpin. It was half past two. She stood up impatiently and fumbled among the sheets of music on the rack. One leaned forward a trifle, swayed irritatingly and fell to the floor with a gleeful crackle. Helena dived after it, and banged it back onto the rack, whereupon all the music, in an avalanche, slid onto the keyboard with a grumbling, reverberating discord.

"Now, now, stop swearing," said a voice behind her, and a man in a big overcoat, silk hat in hand, appeared in the doorway.

Helena started, gave a faint scream and jumped into his arms. "Oh, Greg," she exclaimed, "I thought you'd never come!"

"Oh, you didn't care," he teased, holding her close.

"Didn't I, though?" She twisted herself free, dragged his coat off, pushed him into the big chair by the piano and perched on the arm.

"It's about time you came home, young man," she said reprovingly.

"Well, it's about time you were in bed, madam; so what are you going to do about it?" he answered triumphantly. "Here I nobly sacrifice myself and go to that foolish ball all alone, so you can rest up; and then I come home and find you here with your collar off and your sleeves rolled up and your hair looking as if you hadn't combed it in a week. Shame on you, ungrateful little beast!"

"I was trying to fix that old third act; but I guess it's no use."

"Fix it? Why, I thought you finished it about six months ago."

She shook her head hopelessly. "The end of the third act never was any good. I've got to change it." She started toward the piano, but he seized her wrist and held her back.

"Are you crazy, girl? It comes off tomorrow. You can't do anything now."

"Oh, I know it, I know it," she moaned, "but I've got to. It's the worst thing I ever wrote. Zanelli says it's not worth the trouble of training an orchestra to play such execrable stuff."

"Damn Zanelli! What does that Dago know about it? I tell you it's good music."

"Oh, it's not, Greg. It doesn't mean a thing, and it hasn't even any melody. You know where I mean—where Cleo-

## THE SMART SET

patra sings, after the banquet, when they've all gone except Antony."

"I know, and I don't see anything the matter with it, either. And if there were, you couldn't upset a whole opera now after rehearsing it for the Lord knows how long. Go on to bed, Nell, and stop making a fool of yourself. What's the use of getting all stirred up over nothing?"

"Well, I suppose the conductor of the Metropolitan orchestra knows more about it than you do, and he says it's not fit for a self-respecting music hall; it spoils the whole thing."

"Just that one song?"

"Just that one song is the most important part of the opera. It's Cleopatra's love for Antony, and it ought to be full of abandon and passion and—all that sort of thing, you know. And it's not—it's flat."

"Oh, nonsense! It's well enough. Of course, it's not as good as the rest, but nobody's going to notice, and you can fix it up afterward."

"But I can't. I've worked and worked, and the more I try the more I can't do it. I'll telephone Stedheimer that he can't produce it. He can give them '*L'Elisir d'Amore*' or '*Madame Butterfly*'. They'll like it just as well."

"Nellie! Have you lost your wits? You can't withdraw it now. Think of the royalties! Why, it would cost you fifty thousand dollars to back out now!"

"What if it does?" she answered. "I will not have that stuff come out over my name." Her dark eyes glowed defiantly and her mouth set obstinately.

"Perhaps you've got a few odd thousands to spare, but I haven't. You'll do nothing of the sort."

"If that's what's worrying you, I'll draw you a cheque for fifty thousand dollars and then perhaps you won't feel so bad about it."

"You haven't got it," he answered amiably; "and, naturally, I wouldn't take it if you had. But I shouldn't think you'd want to make yourself so ridiculous. Take it off now— Why, you'd never hear the last of it!"

"I don't care," she replied sullenly. "I will not have that opera produced."

"Look here, Nell! Gather up your wits and talk sense for a while, will you? Are you sure your song is impossible?"

"Perfectly."

"Why didn't you discover it before—you and the clever Zanelli?"

"I did discover it before. I never thought it was worth anything. But the rest was all right, and we had to begin rehearsals, so—I've been working on that song all the time, but the more I work on it the worse it gets. The opera would never carry without it, so we've got to give up the whole business, that's all."

They were silent a few minutes. Helena twisted the rings on her thin, restless fingers.

"I tell you what, Nell—" Gregory began slowly.

"Well?"

"Couldn't you use that song you wrote last winter?"

"Not that—"

"Yes. It's the same style as the rest of the music. And it's written for a soprano. Why, it's just the thing!"

"Oh, but Greg—"

"There's nothing but a violin accompaniment, so you wouldn't even have to orchestrate it. Send it round to Madame Mikhailovna, and there you are. She can learn it in an hour or so as easily as eating her breakfast. Why didn't we think of it before?"

"But, dear, that song's different. It's— Oh, well, don't you understand?"

"No, I don't. All I understand is that you've certainly got the vapors tonight. Why shouldn't you use it?"

"Oh, because—well—I wrote it for you. That's why."

"How is anybody going to know whether it was inspired by *Mark Antony* or *Gregory Rand*? Tell me that, will you?"

"Oh, you do see—you must see—" Her big eyes looked at him beseechingly. "It was the only way I could tell you how much I love you," she whispered; "and it's so—so intimate, it

doesn't seem exactly decent to sing it in public."

"You don't have to sing it yourself. If you did, I could see some point in your objections."

"If I did, I wouldn't care. The singer isn't supposed to be expressing her own sentiments. But," she hesitated, "I wrote it only for you—and—don't you see—I can't!"

"Nonsense. If it were a poem or a picture, it would be different. They're so obvious. But music—nobody knows exactly what you are driving at."

"Even if they don't know, I do, and I'd be thinking all the time—Oh, I can't, I can't!"

"If you're going in for these hairsplitting subtleties, I'm not. It's all very well not to flaunt your private affairs in people's faces, but there's reason in all things. Besides, it seems to me you owe it to the children and to me not to go and make a fool of yourself. We haven't fifty thousand dollars to throw away every time you happen to feel like it."

"Oh, Greg!" She turned her face away and her long, slim fingers stiffened where they rested on his shoulder. "I never thought of that," she said in a strained voice. "I'll send it to Madame Mikhailovna this morning."

One by one the lights went out in the crowded opera house. The many-tongued chatter suddenly ceased, and the curtain rose on the last act of "Cleopatra." From the manager's box Helena Rand looked listlessly at the gorgeous banquet scene, the slaves running here and there, Antony trying to appear at ease in his purple-edged toga, Cleopatra confident and triumphant, glittering in gold embroidery and jewels. The ambassadors from Rome came, attired in stately robes, chanted their messages with much dignity, only to be sent away by Antony at Cleopatra's bidding. Helena scarcely saw them; she did not even notice whether the baritone was keeping on the key or not. Antony sang to Cleopatra with passion and fervor, standing at the front of the stage and apparently ad-

dressing himself to the balcony. When he finished, Cleopatra—

Helena glanced around wildly. Beside her, the soprano of the hour was regarding Madame Mikhailovna contemptuously; behind her the leading musical critic listened with reluctant approval. A sudden rattle of applause told her that Antony had ended his solo. She half started from her chair and looked appealingly at her husband, whose handsome face beamed with amiability and pride. She sank back and waited tensely. Cleopatra rose majestically and strode toward Antony with much clicking of jewelry, rolled her eyes at him bewitchingly, rested one fat, white hand on her hip and commenced. Helena watched her through half-shut eyes, her head erect, her cheeks white, every nerve strained. By this time Cleopatra was clasped to Antony's togaed bosom, but not so closely as to interfere with the necessary exercise of her lungs. Her full, rich voice, now vibrant with desire, now tender and caressing, rose in joyous surrender and sank in dragging, cloying passion. Every note cut keenly into Helena's consciousness, a sneering mockery of her most cherished emotions. An insane hatred of Madame Mikhailovna overwhelmed her. That she should dare to gloat so brazenly—A burst of applause thundered through the house. The curtain fell, and slid up again over the bowing and smirking Cleopatra. Helena still stared at her, dazed and motionless.

"Now aren't you glad you took my advice?" whispered a voice in her ear.

The curtain had gone down on the last act, the singers, the conductor, the manager, the composer, had mutually felicitated and complimented each other, when at last Helena effected a difficult escape from a group of open-mouthed admirers and vanished into her carriage. She settled back into the corner and half closed her eyes as Gregory slammed the door and sat down beside her.

"Well, girl," he began cheerfully, "you certainly did a good job this time and I'm proud of you."

## THE SMART SET

She made no answer, and he rattled on gaily.

"Harrison said it was the best thing he'd ever heard, and the *Sun* man predicted that it will change the course of modern music and inaugurate a new era in opera."

"What did *you* think of it?" Helena asked.

"I? Oh, I think it's great! You know, I always like your music, Nell."

"It isn't really good. I'm just a fad, that's all. In ten years no one will have heard of me."

"Nonsense, dear; you've come to stay. Why, you ought to have heard Harrison talk about you! He said Cleopatra's love song was wonderful—the best thing in it. So you see I was right, after all."

She looked at him steadily. "Did you like the way Mikhailovna sang it?"

"Yes. I thought she did it very well. She puts lots of emotion into her voice, doesn't she?"

"I suppose so," answered Helena in a flat, toneless voice.

"Come, now, cheer up and tell me what kind of a bracelet you want to remember Cleopatra by. I think rubies would be pretty."

"Rubies? Do you think you can afford them?"

"I will, if I want to. I won't have you or anyone else dictating to me about what presents I shall give my best girl."

"But you said—"  
She turned her head and looked into his eyes, her own half questioning, half pleading. He put his arm around her and drew her toward him.

"Said what, silly?"  
"Oh, you *are* nice to me," she answered irrelevantly.



## PRISON SONG

By JOHN CARTER.

**T**HOU that hast cherished me,  
Thou of my starveling life the nobler part,  
From the shamed sorrow of thy Calvary,  
Look up, dear heart!

Dark is the silent night,  
Yet do I hear the restless winds afar.  
Lo, in the east the somber heaven's alight,  
Shines forth a star!

Eagerly I crave life,  
Scorning the thousand shadows that assail.  
Thou hast so armed me for the utmost strife,  
I dare not fail.



**I**N the multiplication table of the world, half a friend is twice an enemy.

# 3-13-33-39

Par PAUL REBOUX

**R**ICCARDO BRANCIA était un des joueurs de lotto les plus persévérateurs.

Demandez à des Napolitains de vous expliquer ce qu'est cette loterie. Ils vous diront que l'ambe est une association de deux numéros, le terne de trois, le quaterne de quatre, et que, si les numéros choisis sortent le jour du tirage dans l'ordre qu'on a désigné, un gain colossal récompense les miseurs. Finalement, chacun tirera de sa poche un billet. Là-bas, tout le monde joue et la Loterie Royale disperse chaque samedi à la population entière deux ou trois joies, mêlées à des milliers de déceptions—qui ne découragent personne.

Riccardo Brancia connaissait par cœur les nombres que la science cabalistique associe aux objets et aux événements. Il n'ignorait même pas les nuances et les délicatesses de ces attributions et savait, par exemple, que le mal de tête correspond au chiffre 49, qu'il faut jouer le 32 si l'on a mal aux dents, le 7 pour le mal d'estomac, le 79 pour le mal aux yeux, le 57 pour le mal de poitrine et le 2 ou le 80, suivant la hiérarchie du cas, quand il s'agit d'une affection dont il suffit de taire le siège pour la désigner avec exactitude.

Il avait essayé toutes les combinaisons, celles qu'enseignent les vieux traités, celles qu'indiquent dans les annonces des journaux les spécialistes de martingales, celle qu'un moine mendiant vous chuchote dans la rue contre une offrande de quelques sous. Il avait étudié la loi des fréquences et pointé, des années durant, les numéros favorisés. Il avait joué, selon le hasard de la dernière minute, le nombre des bossus, des femmes enceintes ou des chevaux

blancs rencontrés sur le chemin du marchand de billets. A trois reprises il avait gagné : deux fois cinq cents francs pour une mise de deux lires placées sur un ambe, et une fois huit mille cinq cents francs pour deux lires placées sur un terne. Ce jour-là, tous ses proches avaient cru qu'il perdait la raison.

Or, il advint qu'une nuit Riccardo Brancia eut un songe.

Pour aller prier sur la tombe paternelle, il avait pris la route qui va de la Porta Capuana au Campo-Santo et sur laquelle, presque tout le jour, défilent des cortèges funèbres. Il suivait avec peine, sous un soleil de midi, cette voie creusée de vallonnements, où le sirocco faisait tourbillonner une poussière aveuglante. Il allait assoiffé, la gorge aride, les cils poudreux, le front mouillé de sueur.

Un enterrement le dépassa, un simple landau peint de blanc, aux vitres gravées de torches renversées et de fleurons, et dont les quatre lanternes, deux par devant, deux par derrière, étaient allumées. A l'intérieur, un petit cercueil d'enfant, couvert de lilas et d'anémones, reposait sur les genoux des parents. Ceux-ci tenaient à la main des cierges dont la flamme jaune, sursautant aux cahots, était comme absorbée par l'éclatante lumière du jour.

Riccardo continuait à marcher dans la direction du cimetière, quand, en se retournant, il aperçut, très loin, deux autres cortèges formés chacun d'un corbillard vitré et de quelques voitures. L'un de ces corbillards était tendu de velours rouge à crêpines d'or, l'autre était tapissé de vert frangé de jaune.

Les deux chevaux de chaque attelage disparaissaient sous une ample robe assortie au char et percée seulement, à l'endroit des yeux, comme une cagoule de pénitent. Rapidement, l'allure des deux convois s'accélérerait. Une sorte de rivalité s'établissait entre les cochers des voitures funèbres. Celui que venait en second voulait gagner le premier rang et celui qui tenait la tête ne voulait pas céder sa place. C'était à qui se dépasserait tour à tour. Quittant le trot, qui est l'allure normale des enterrements italiens, les chevaux avaient pris le petit galop de chasse. Les membres des deux familles mettaient la tête aux portières et s'interpellaient. Tous étaient animés d'une émulation vaniteuse. Les cochers se défièrent en faisant claquer leurs fouets, et quand les deux cortèges passèrent devant Riccardo, ce fut d'une allure insensée, d'une allure de course, dans un vacarme de ferraille et de glaces ballottantes, dans une trombe de poussière soulevée.

Riccardo ne s'émouvait point d'un spectacle qui est quotidien sur ce parcours. Mais il avait soif. Il entra chez un vendeur de boissons et se fit servir une bouteille d'eau gazeuse. Pour s'abriter du soleil et du vent, il s'était assis sous une tonnelle de glycine. On lui proposa du fenouil. Il accepta et se mit à trancher la bulbe blanche avec son couteau. Quand il eut terminé, machinalement, il gratta la table du bout de la lame et y traça des signes, des signes bizarre, des lettres, peut-être des chiffres. . . .

A ce moment de son rêve, Riccardo se réveilla subitement.

Des chiffres? . . . Il y pensa toute la matinée. S'il avait pu se souvenir de ces chiffres, peut-être des ambes, peut-être des ternes, miraculeusement envoyés du Paradis par l'âme de son père trépassé!

Mais, malgré son application, il ne parvenait pas à retrouver dans sa mémoire les signes qu'il avait formés en rêve. Et cette impuissance commençait à l'obséder douloureusement.

Tout en se raillant lui-même d'une telle crédulité, il se demanda s'il n'y aurait pas lieu d'aller au cimetière.

Peut-être les défunts connaissent-ils les lois mystérieuses de la chance? Il n'est pas sans exemple qu'ils soient entrés en communication avec les vivants. En somme, cette démarche ne comportait aucun risque, même pas celui de le rendre ridicule, puisqu'elle attesterait seulement la piété méritoire d'un bon fils.

Donc, Riccardo partit.

Il eut une petite secousse d'émotion lorsqu'à mi-chemin il aperçut un enterrement d'enfant qui gagnait le Campo-Santo. . . . Après un quart d'heure de marche, il se retourna et vit, au loin, un vol de poussière. Cette fois, il crut que son cœur allait cesser de battre. Deux corbillards, côté à côté, un vert, et . . . oui, un rouge! Riccardo sentit ses jambes flétrir. Il dut s'appuyer contre un mur. Or, ce mur était celui d'une boutique. De grandes pancartes annonçaient qu'on vendait là du vin, de la bière, de l'eau gazeuse. Il osait à peine suivre la façade pour voir s'il existait, en retrait, une tonnelle couverte de glycine. Enfin il s'y résolut. Couronne de Dieu! une tonnelle! Blème d'angoisse, la gorge serrée, les tempes battantes' il s'approcha de la tonnelle.

— Que faut-il pour vous, signor? fit le patron qui l'avait suivi.

Riccardo poussa un cri rauque en désignant la table sur laquelle il apercevait, gravés par une main d'oisif ces chiffres: 3—13—33—39

3 . . . il avait vu trois enterrements! 13 . . . le chiffre qui veut dire: Corbillard! 33 . . . la Soif! 39 . . . la Table!

Exalté comme si le voile du destin se fût soudain déchiré devant ses yeux, Riccardo tomba à genoux dans la poussière et récita un *Ave* pour la mémoire paternelle, sous les yeux du débitant stupéfait.

Puis il courut chez lui, rassembla ses maigres économies et misa le tout sur le quaterne miraculeusement révélé.

Voilà douze ans de cela. Depuis douze ans, chaque semaine, Riccardo joue infructueusement le 3—13—33—39.

Il est, aujourd'hui, nettoyeur de pieuvres à la poissonnerie.

# HER CLAIM

By KATE McLAURIN

OUTSIDE the sun was falling through the winter twilight, and as it grew darker within the man leaned forward and stirred the fire until a cheerful glow illuminated the room.

The woman opposite him lay back in her chair, one white hand holding a paper knife, the other the book they had been discussing, the book that had made her famous. During the silence that fell between them, she finished cutting the leaves and laid it on the tea table at her right. Hinton picked up the book and opened it.

"But I want your autograph in it," he said. "Indeed, considering what old friends we are, you might have sent it to me without my asking."

"It didn't occur to me that you would want it. We aren't a very sentimental two, you know."

"Marian!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, of course I knew you would read it—but, I mean, care for an autographed copy," and she smiled as if she were a little tired of the subject.

"What's the trouble, Marian? Aren't you wonderfully happy over your book? You are famous, you know. Somehow, I want to keep telling you, for you don't seem to realize it."

"Oh, yes, I do. I read all the reviews; in fact, I have a press bureau send me even the smallest ones. What more would you have?"

"I would have you take a normal, healthy interest in your achievement. Be proud of it. Why, it's worth it. I'd give five years of my life to have done it," he replied.

"Sometimes I wish you had instead of me," she answered.

"Why?" he asked.

"You would have enjoyed it so much, and I would have been very happy in your pleasure—but, you see—" and she shrugged her shoulders to indicate that fate wandereth where it listeth.

"Well," he said, "truthfully, Marian, I never dreamed you could do it."

"No—why?" She bent forward suddenly, interested.

"Because your view of life has always appeared to me to be clear and keenly analytical but with no especial heart quality. So I was utterly unprepared for the depth, the grasp—"

"I've been a newspaper woman for years. I ought to have grasp," she interposed.

"That's just it," he answered. "Journalism is so apt to vitiate one's talent. You are so busy with the surface of life that its depths escape you. At least, it has affected me so. But here you—"

"Allan, don't grow lyrical in my praise. Really, I am glad that people, that you especially, like it. It is very generous of you, a fellow craftsman, to be so interested in it. But I am just a little tired of the book. People talk to me of nothing else."

Her wish to let the subject rest here was plain, but through their long friendship Hinton's wish had always been the dominant one, so he pressed the matter further.

"If I hadn't known you for fifteen years, Marian, I would think this attitude a pose. But you are the last woman in the world one could accuse

of double dealing. So I am forced to believe that it is because you haven't yet realized what you have done."

"Yes, I do—for money is coming in plentifully for the first time in my life," and she stretched out her arms exultingly.

The surprised look on his face checked this mood, and she reached for a small hand screen and held it between her face and the fire.

"I do realize it," she repeated slowly. "I know that I have thought a great deal in my life; I have observed closely and I suppose I have had my share of suffering. All this in some way gave the book what value it has."

"Of course," the man replied, "those are the things that go into the making of a great book. Marian"—he leaned forward and took her hand in his—"isn't it that all these things—the thought, the observation, the suffering—have tired you? Life is hard for such women as you. And you have fought with life so bravely—been such a valiant little soul—"

"How do you know that?" she asked.

"Why, haven't I known you for fifteen years?"

"Oh," was all she answered, and he went on:

"You were such a good daughter, such a fine friend—such a—oh, everything. Marian, can't you understand what I want to say?"

The oncoming night hid the sudden tightening of her lips from him, and she withdrew her hand so gently he scarcely felt rebuffed.

"You have drifted from our subject, the book. I was going to tell you the reason I am not elated or overjoyful about it, and you have read into me a cry for help."

"No; I—"

"Oh, yes," she insisted lightly, "man-like, you have—but you mustn't."

"It isn't only because of that, Marian, but because—"

"Wait; let me have my say. All afternoon you have been prodding me about the old book, and now, when I

want to talk, you won't let me. You see," she continued, "the firelight and the twilight are making you serious, and it's my duty to save you from such folly."

"Marian, I—" He tried again to speak but she was firm.

"I insist. You mentioned a while ago my various good qualities, among others my attitude toward my mother. There was nothing remarkable in that. I loved her and I was brought up to cherish her. When we were thrown on the world, my first thought was to care for her. I did to the best of my ability until her death. It was nothing but my instinct at work. You said I was brave—valiant. Well, what else could I be? Life pressed on me, and I met the pressure with what resistance there was in me. Fortunately, it was enough to let me survive."

"Then the book. The experiences of my life were joined by the experiences of others that I had observed, and somehow the book was written."

"But you should feel the victory, the joy of doing," said Hinton.

"Why—because I responded to an exacting law? For so much as had been given to me, I have given out so much."

"That's what the world calls achievement. That's why today you are great."

"No," she answered vehemently, "don't you see that to be great, a deed must partake of the will? It must be a rising above instinct, above the expected, above inclination. It must be bigger than you are, something that makes the inner you expand through the effort. Don't you understand?"

"I can't really say that I do. You know, metaphysics were never my forte. I have always been keen about the natural value of things," Hinton replied.

"Yes, I know," she said; "but I am not sure that what I mean is altogether in the realm of metaphysics. I might make myself clearer by telling you a story. Only, it will make me feel quite ancient to sit here and tell you a story of my youth."

"Your youth!" the man exclaimed.

"Yes—I had one, you know."

"Of course, but—we have been such close friends for so long—"

"That we ought to know all about each other. But, you see, close friends never do—their perspective is gone. Why, even this afternoon I have learned new things about you."

"But this thing that you are going to tell me about—did it happen after you joined the *Post*?"

"Yes," she answered.

"And I never knew?" he asked.

"You never suspected that I was in love with—a man. Yes," she went on, "in love as one can be at twenty—with every good thing in me. But that's anticipating my story. At first we were such good friends, he and I—just like two boys. You know, in those days even you, who cared so little for girls, said I was like 'another fellow.'"

"But the man—was he a newspaper man?" Hinton asked.

"Does that matter?" she said impatiently. "He was young, particularly young and joyous, and I never was. Then he had a quality of mind that interested me greatly—a certain detachment that produced the effect of extreme quickness and subtlety. We were the best of comrades—we talked, ate and read together. And all the while I was losing ground in my work. At first I realized it only in a dim way; then later I came to see it clearly. My best thoughts, my freshest energy, my untiring enthusiasm were going into his work. And he began improving in every way. His output was larger and of better caliber. It seemed almost as if he had a great future. But then, because I had to earn my own living, I'd sometimes ask myself why it was that my own creative power seemed gone. Writing was no longer a joy. Ideas only struck fire when I was with him and we were making plans for his future. They were always plans for *his* future; somehow, I never was included in them. Still, I was very happy, for, you see, I knew so little."

"Then a trivial thing caused the first break between us. It was soon mended, but not before my eyes had been opened to the truth of the situation. The thing I had called friendship was love—a big love—mother, sister, wife love all in one. And I was just twenty."

The woman paused. The strain of talking of a long hidden thing told on her sensitive organism, and her voice had sunk almost to a whisper, but it was even and betrayed no emotion.

"It is useless to go into the details of my surprise at this discovery. I said over and over to myself that it could not be—that he didn't love and I shouldn't love him—that my stupidity would spoil our fine free comradeship.

"My impulse was to go away somewhere and hide until the pain was over. But I had to work, so that was impossible. And then he was very dependent on me—at least I thought so—and in those days I had a great sense of responsibility. So, as women have from the beginning, I hid it deep in my heart and outwardly things went on as they had before; but inwardly—A while ago you called me valiant; if you had a record of the year that followed, you would know how well I deserved the word. There might have been wild, sleepless nights, but the days were full of a calm, steady friendship."

She paused and shifted the hand screen so that not a ray of the firelight fell on her face.

"Then, when the torture was at its height, when I knew that I loved him with the very soul of me and that the only thing I asked of life was that he should love me, I did the one thing in my whole life that gives me a claim to greatness.

"I remember the night it happened. For hours I had walked the floor, racked with the hopelessness of everything—love, work, life. Suddenly my mind seemed to wake from a long sleep, and I stopped and said to myself: 'This is an evil thing. I can't work and I must. I can't feel the joy of things as I should. I can only suffer

to serve a useless love. And by the power of my own will, I not only put this love out of my life, but I will that it shall die.' And then I could see that love lie before me—a tangible thing—that had lived and now was dead—dead forever."

"Then?" said the man in a whisper.

"Then I began to write. I wrote until morning and for days after with feverish intensity. The work I did was good, and I was mad with the first joy of my freedom. It would be wonderful to tell you that this lasted—but it didn't. There was a reaction, a dull period of unproductivity—before life settled into peaceful and fairly successful grooves."

"And he meant nothing to you thereafter?" Hinton asked.

"Nothing in reality, though he never noticed the difference, and I have always been a good friend to him—it was part of the bargain I made with myself. I would have been a failure, and I wouldn't tell you of it today, had I let there appear any change in my attitude toward him. So, you see, I am capable of double dealing."

"Yes." He nodded. "And he never suspected?"

"No; he thought very little of such things. In fact, poor fellow, it was all my own silly little tragedy; he never thought of me save as 'another mind'—until recently."

"And you?"

"My story stands as I told it."

"But you owe him more than you realize," said Hinton, "for it was by the light of your 'silly little tragedy' that you wrote this book."

"That is true," the woman answered, "and I am glad to owe it to him in memory of a time that was. I should like to thank him. I do thank him." She rose from her chair and held out her hands to the man opposite her.

"Marian—I?"

"Yes; didn't you guess?"

"How could I?"

"For a clever man you are very stupid, Allan," she said with a laugh. "Don't you know that every man is the hero of a story once in his life?"

"Don't laugh, Marian. I've been a great fool, but—I love you, Marian."

"No!" she cried. "You don't love me. You love my success; you love my book. You love me because I can wear soft gowns and look pale and interesting. You love me because I appear unusual and appeal to you as an *objet d'art*—and above all, you love me because I don't need you."

"When I was young and joyous and filled with a great love, I was nothing but a repository for your woes, a stimulant for your energy, a refuge for your vanity."

"Marian!" he cried.

"Oh, Allan! I didn't mean to say all this to you—at least, not in such a spirit. All this was so long ago—there should be no bitterness between us now."

"I'll make it up to you, Marian, if you will let me."

"No, Allan," she said, with a shake of her head, "I don't believe in resurrections, and not even for you, my friend, would I give up my one claim to greatness."



**S**ENTIMENTAL GIRL—And will you love me 'forever and a day'?  
UNION WOOER—I will love you forever, but our rules forbid overtime.



**A** STRONG enemy is more to be desired than a weak friend.

# THE DRAMATIC VALEDICTORY

By GEORGE JEAN NATHAN

WHAT bucolic scribes are prone to refer to as "the falling of the curtain on the theatrical season of 1909-1910" is already an occurred fact. The theater has surrendered to the beating sun and Coney Island. The loop-the-loop has supplanted the sex problem play in the popular favor, and the drama of the eternal triangle has given way to the eternal frankfurter. Be it loop-the-loop or polo, be it frankfurter or lady finger—your public's taste is one and the same where the theater is concerned. And the theater is distinctly not to that taste in the drowsy, browsy, flannel trousy days.

Before coming to a final and retrospective survey of the theatrical season, however, there remain for description and comment seven productions made in the twilight of the dramatic year. Of these seven, two were all-star revivals of old time favorites; two were of the musical variety; one was a bright comedy by a newly discovered playwright; one was a dull comedy by an already frequently discovered playwright; and one was suppressed by the Mayor of New York. Of this latter, by way of making the most of a bad example, initial fleeting notice will be taken. The affair was called "*THE GIRL WITH THE WHOOPING COUGH*," and was employed as the means for exploiting a lady called Valleska Suratt, whose dramatic talents had hitherto found their outlet chiefly in the species of vaudeville sketch whose plot consists of a screen, a divan, a tiger skin and a locked door. The thing named was credited to Stanislaus Stange, although, to be equitable in

the case of the latter, it is said to have had its inspiration (*sic!*) in an exceedingly nasty French farce. As revealed to an American audience—or, at least, an audience in America—the thing proved to be so nauseating and so disgusting in its futile efforts to be risqué that the city officials compelled it, in the paraphrased phraseology of a much sung song, to "make a noise like a whoop and roll away." Further comment is unnecessary.

THE all-star revivals of Robertson's comedy "*CASTE*," and Sir Charles Young's classic crime melodrama, "*JIM THE PENMAN*," resulted in two of the most enjoyable and successful events of the entire season. The first named was presented by Charles Frohman with a splendid company including Marie Tempest, Elsie Ferguson, Maude Milton, Edwin Arden, Julian Royce, G. P. Huntley and Graham Browne. The play, despite the element of obviousness and decided deliberation inherent in the drama of its time, was sufficiently interesting to convince the ophicleidean theater patron of today that speed is no more essential to legitimate comedy than the buzz saw is to melodrama. Frequently, indeed, does speed help, but only too often are foot races across the stage, complex swinging door maneuvers and transom climbing confused with dramatic action, when in reality they are little else than indoor athletic events. In this era of innumerable chorus girl matrimonial alliances with the scions of society, tending undeniably toward an eventual substitution of, say, "*Havana*" for the *Mayflower*

on the part of the ancestor boasters of the future, the revival of "CASTE" was opportune. Each morning's newspaper sets forth the case of an Honorable George D'Alroy who has taken unto himself an Esther Eccles, and if Robertson's solution of the marital problem of his dramatic couple is happier than that which is often actually chronicled in the newspaper of a few months' later date, his comedy remains withal romantically *vraisemblant*. As you probably know, "CASTE" relates the story of a young aristocrat who marries a chorus girl; of the stubbornly irreconcilable attitude toward the girl of the Marquise de St. Maur, the young man's mother; of the clash of family versus family; and of the final dominance of love over class distinction. The production as a whole was a big mark of credit on the Frohman theatrical record.

On the same high plane of merit, and even more interesting because of the intrinsic thrill thrusts of the play itself, was the Brady-Shubert revivification of the famous old forgery melodrama, "JIM THE PENMAN," with a superb cast including Wilton Lackaye, John Mason, Theodore Roberts, Thurlow Bergen, Florence Roberts, Marguerite Clark and Jeffreys Lewis. In line with the recent vogue of such thief-detective plays as "Alias Jimmy Valentine," the revival of this "Alias Jimmy" classic was quite as nicely timed as was that of "Caste." Indeed, with chorus ladies and gentlemen crooks part and parcel of many of our best families nowadays, the selection of the plays in question showed rare managerial acumen. "JIM THE PENMAN" has lost none of its attention holding qualities since that day, many years ago, when, still in kilts, we aroused the ire of the fat party sitting next to us by smearing his coat sleeve with sticky molasses candy.

"JIM THE PENMAN" is the Lillian Russell of crime dramas. It will always remain the same; it will always excite admiration. What if Captain Redwood, the detective, employs sleuthing methods that, in this ad-

vanced day of criminal psychology, handwriting experts and similar devices for the speedy conviction of persons without wealth, would fail to ensnare the smallest boy who knows his Nick Carter? What if Baron Hartfeld is such a villainously villainous villain that he does not even require evening clothes and a black mustache to identify him? And what if the frequent explosions of "My God!" emotionalism on the part of Mrs. Ralston seem to emanate less from the heart than from the manuscript? You can't keep a good thrill down. And there are dozens of them in this play. Furthermore, "JIM THE PENMAN," as presented by the stellar aggregation in question, was to be highly recommended to all those theatergoers who love to believe there are no good actors left in America.

EVERY once in so often a producer becomes imbued with the idea that a comedy surcharged with melodrama and presented with some fine scenery will make a million dollars for his astute particular self. And every once in so often a producer finds he has been mistaken. "Melodramatic comedies," as they are termed, may, like Nevada gold mines and Bronx real estate, pay some day—but thus far, alas, they have not succeeded in getting beyond the prospectus state. The discriminating difficulty with a melodramatic comedy seems to be at just what time it is eminently proper to be thrilled and at just what time it is antithetically proper to be hilarious. And the line is so finely drawn that the two almost invariably lap over. The result is embarrassing. There is no sensation so completely distressing to an honest, upright audience as the feeling that it has been deceived in spite of itself. If, for example, an audience experiences a thrill and subsequently comes to know that, instead of that thrill, it should have normally felt the impulse to laugh, it feels so ashamed that it wants to go right home and hide its head under the covers. Earlier in the season this happened in the case of

a melodramatic comedy called "Detective Sparkes," and more recently it happened again in the case of another melodramatic comedy called "THE SPITFIRE." The latter, by Edward Peple, resembled in plot much the aspect of a little man trying to tell a funny story during a severe thunderstorm. There were stolen jewels and a tossing yacht and villains and rescues and a hero and a fist fight and gun play and a shipwreck and a lot of other comic things. Charles Cherry had the leading part, and the leading part had Charles Cherry—most of the time. Whenever the dramatist gave the actor a fair chance, however, Mr. Cherry did his duty. Miss Ruth Maycliffe, as Valda Girard, the heroine, upon being treated unmercifully by the newspaper reviewers the morning after, is reported to have written a note to one of the latter, stating: "I would rather be young and be a poor actress than be old and a mean critic." It only remains to say that Miss Maycliffe has her wish. Miss Oza Waldrop acted the *ingénue* part in her usual saccharine, sputtering manner of a firecracker exploding in a can of maple syrup. The scenic investiture of the play was very attractive.

"HER HUSBAND'S WIFE," by A. E. Thomas, and produced by Henry Miller with an excellent company, including Laura Hope Crewes, Grace Elliston, Robert Warwick, Orme Caldarra and Mr. Miller himself, was one of the brightest incidents of the closing season. Taking for his theme a hypochondriac wife who, fearful that her end was near, selected her husband's second mate, Mr. Thomas evolved a couple of hours of real comedy that could be guaranteed to cure any hypochondriac in the audience.

De Wolf Hopper's return was made in a three-act song comedy based on Molière's "Le Médecin Malgré Lui" and called "A MATINEE IDOL." The book is said to have been the work of Augustus Thomas, which is interesting in view of the fact that it contains a decidedly funny burlesque of the "you can't even hold that gun" episode in

the same dramatist's "Witching Hour," the revolver in this case, however, being a ham sandwich. The show as a whole is as enjoyable an entertainment as I have seen in some time, and Hopper's personality remains the same old warm-hearted, magnetically funny personality it has always been. In short, "A MATINEE IDOL" is clean, comical, colorful, kickfull and happy.

"TILLIE'S NIGHTMARE," with that peerless three hundred and twenty-five pounds of jollity named Marie Dressler in the leading role, was the first of the summer music shows, and scored a hit as big as its star. It takes courage to employ the word "nightmare" in the title of a play in these days of a nation of some eighty-six million dramatic critics aching to find fault with everything, but in the case in point, the only person who would be justified in turning the title against the show back of it would be a deaf, dumb and blind colored man who had been refused admission to the theater because he had bought his ticket of a speculator. A special word of commendation is due Mr. Ellis for his captivating second act costume designs.

We come now to a retrospective view of the dramatic season just passed into history. Statistics show that there were made one hundred and eighty-three productions, of which number one hundred and twenty-eight were new plays. Of the latter, it is pleasant to note that eighty-one were the work of native authors, as opposed to forty-seven from foreign sources. In its entirety, and quite apart from the financial viewpoint—which should be of little concern to a commentator on the drama itself—the season must be regarded as a successful one. The class of production was generally high; there were revealed many dramas of positive merit; there was presented a particularly praiseworthy grade of musical entertainments; there is to be chronicled a not inconsiderable addition to the list of capable native players; and

there must be noticed an unmistakable and increasing tendency toward placing on the stage works possessed of qualities other than those which are commonly alleged to annihilate the ennui that, it is presupposed, dominates all theater audiences.

The most interesting theatrical event of the year was the advent of the New Theater in the sacred circle of drama houses. While to be criticized for its partiality toward Harvard and other foreign institutions, the New Theater is to be congratulated on having achieved a record never equaled in this country by any other single theatrical enterprise during the first year of its existence. The New Theater, as a consequence, stands today a vital figure in the dramatic arena of the United States. And, if it has not entirely justified its purpose in exploiting native talent to a greater extent, its promises seem, at least, safe to be relied on. Maeterlinck's "Sister Beatrice," the revival of "The Winter's Tale," and Sheldon's melodrama, "The Nigger," are to be recorded, in this order, as the worthiest presentations made in the initial season of the endowed theater. The first named play, to my belief, was the finest presentation of the entire dramatic year.

SUBDIVIDING the drama into its several forms, it is to be chronicled that "The Fortune Hunter," by Winchell Smith, stands foremost as the best comedy of the season, with "Is Matrimony a Failure?" and "The Bachelor's Baby" following in the order named; that "Alias Jimmy Valentine," by Paul Armstrong out of O. Henry, was the best melodrama; that "Seven Days," by Avery Hopwood and Mary Rinehart, with "The Lottery Man," by Rida Johnson Young, were the most laughable farces; and that "The City," by Fitch, "Madame X," by Bisson, "Mid-Channel," by Pinero, "The Only Law," by Mizner and Howard, "Herod" by Phillips, "The Passing of the Third Floor Back," by Jerome, and "The Affinity," by Brieux, were the most laudable dramas. The ab-

sence of financial success in the instance of "The Only Law" and "The Affinity" remains a matter of no critical moment. To "The Arcadians" goes the characterization of having been the very best musical play of the year, although "The Dollar Princess," "The Chocolate Soldier" and "The Jolly Bachelors" are not to be omitted in the chronicle of praise.

The worst play of the year was "Mr. and Mrs. Daventry," produced for a few nights at the Hackett Theater; "Mr. Buttles" was the runner-up.

The most beautiful bit of scenic painting was revealed in the second act of "The Cottage in the Air," showing a little thatched English cottage bathed in the hot sun, with the long road winding its way beyond toward the purple shadows of the cool, distant hills. The most interesting dialogistic scene was that between the detective and thief in the third act of "Alias Jimmy Valentine," where the thief, at bay, tricks the skeptical sleuth into believing he is not the man he is after. The funniest scene was that at the end of the second act of "Seven Days," when, in the quarantined house, the troublesome aunt is shoved back through the window just as the occupants believe they have got rid of her for good and all. The most thrilling scene was that which forms the climax of "The City," where Hannock, the degenerate, after shooting his sister, fights for his soul with the unmovable Rand. The most affecting scene occurred in "Madame X," when the woman on trial for her life watches through her tears the efforts of her son and counsel to win the sympathy of the jury. The most daring scene was that in the third act of "The Three Daughters of Monsieur Dupont," in which a man and his wife indulge in a physical encounter that is halted only by exhaustion. The most inspiring and impressive scene was that in "Sister Beatrice," where the Virgin comes to take the sinning sister's place from out great clouds of golden, shimmering mist.

And now, with a sigh, we camphor-ball our critical selves—until September.

# A FICTIONEER OF THE LABORATORY

By H. L. MENCKEN

IT seems to be pretty generally agreed by the critics, at least in the United States, that H. G. Wells has stepped into the long vacant boots of Charles Dickens, and for that notion, it must be confessed, there is no little excuse.

Wells, in truth, and to change the figure, has rediscovered and staked out for himself the English lower middle class that Dickens knew so intimately and loved with such shameless sentimentality—that hunkerous, uncleanly, tea swilling *garde du corps* of all the more disgusting virtues, traditions, superstitions and epidemic diseases of the Anglican people. The other novelists across the water strike either above it or below it—above it at the magnificent and, as it were, almost supernatural indecency of the aristocracy, or at the moral anarchy of the self-conscious class of social climbers; or below it at the ingenuous swinishness of the herd. Thus we have on the one hand a copious outpouring of novels of the "Dodo" school (even "*Esther Waters*" and "*What Maisie Knew*" belong to it), with their melancholy presentations of perfumed polygamy; and on the other hand a steady supply of novels of the Hardy-Phillipps-Morrison school, with their tedious prying into the amours and political ambitions, the theology and gnosiology of Wesleyan farmhands, seduced milkmaids, Whitechapel paupers and other such vermin. Now and then, of course, a writer may be found who belongs to both schools, or who flits irreso-

lutely from one to the other—George Moore, for example; but it is seldom that any halt is made between the two. In other words, little attention is given in the current English fiction to the average Englishman. You will find plenty of degenerate dukes there, and plenty of Parliament men conducting low intrigues with clergymen's wives, and plenty of felonious parlor maids and derelicts of the Embankment; but you will seldom find an honest English haberdasher, lawfully married to one wife, and a true believer in hell, monogamy, Beecham's pills and the British constitution. I know not why, and do not guess, but so it is.

It is to this common and intensely human man, to this private soldier in the ranks of Christian civilization, that Mr. Wells turns in his new novel, "*Mr. POLLY*" (*Duffield*, \$1.50). Dickens would have loved Mr. Polly—loved him for his helplessness, his doggish joys, his calflike sorrows, his incurable nationalism—but it quickly appears that Mr. Wells loves him no more than a bacteriologist loves the rabbit whose spine he draws out through the gullet; and so we arrive at the notion that, despite a good deal of likeness, there are many points of difference between Dickens and Wells. They are, in truth, as far apart as the poles, for Dickens was a sentimentalist and Wells is a scientist, and between sentiment and science there is even less in common than between kissing a pretty girl and kissing her mamma. Dickens regarded his characters as a young

mother regards her baby; Wells looks at his as a porkpacker looks at a hog. Dickens believed that the way to judge a man was to test his willingness to give money to the orphans; Wells believes that it is safer and more accurate to find out the percentage of hydrochloric acid in his gastric juices.

As a matter of fact, the history of Mr. Polly, as Wells presents him to us, is a history of Mr. Polly's stomach. We are told, on the very first page of the book, that the low spirits in which we find him are due to the fact that his wife is an atrocious cook. "He suffered from indigestion . . . nearly every afternoon . . . but as he lacked introspection he projected the associated discomfort upon the world. Every afternoon he discovered afresh that life as a whole, and every aspect of life that presented itself, was 'beastly.'" It is the business of the first half of the book to trace the origin of Mr. Polly's indigestion—in coarse, ill cooked food; in badly ventilated sleeping quarters; in lack of exercise; in the dull, sedentary life of a haberdasher in a small town, with a sluttish, unimaginative wife and no means of escape from her—and to show its lamentable consequences. Mr. Polly goes constantly from bad to worse, from mere discomfort to pessimism and despair. His day's work becomes intolerably painful; he is eternally irritated; he quarrels with his neighbors; he begins to lose money in his shop. Finally he decides to put an end to his woes by burning down that shop and cutting his throat.

The first of these desperate acts is accomplished with brilliant success, but Mr. Polly loses courage when he comes to the second. Thus he finds himself still alive and still very uncomfortable, but with a hundred pounds of insurance in his wallet instead of a wad of bills payable. What to do? Set up another shop? The thought of it sickens! Take to the woods? Well, why not? It is a short step from the idea to the act. Mr. Polly separates that insurance money into two parts,

puts one where his wife will find it—and fares forth into the open country. He is a free man again, an opulent bachelor, the most enviable of creatures.

Thereafter the story describes the gradual salvation of Mr. Polly's stomach, and through it, of Mr. Polly's immortal soul. He happens one day, quite by chance, into a quaint sixteenth century hostelry on a river bank—the Potwell Inn, to wit—and the motherly old soul who owns it sets a plate of honest roast beef before him. Mr. Polly eats and is thrilled.

Eight years afterwards he is still there—still eating the nourishing, digestible victuals of that saintly and accomplished cook, and moving ever upward and onward in the scale of brute creation. He becomes a sound man, a brave man, an efficient man, a happy man. As we part from him, he is sitting on the river bank in the cool of a golden summer evening, tranquilly smoking his pipe and meditating upon the great problems of existence. "Whenever there's signs of a good sunset," says Mr. Polly, "and I'm not too busy, I'll come and sit out here." Envious man! True philosopher! He has found the secret of life at last!

"MR. POLLY" is written with all of Mr. Wells's customary facility and humor. The sheer fluency of the writing, in truth, is one of the book's faults. One feels that more careful polishing would have improved it—that it should have remained in the author's desk a year or so before going to the printer. Another fault lies in the fact that Mr. Wells is sometimes just a bit too scientific. Intent upon exploring Mr. Polly as a biological specimen, he seems to forget, now and then, that Mr. Polly is also a human being. In other words, a dash of Dickensian sentimentality would often add something to the flavor of Wells. But I have no hesitation whatever in saying that Wells, as he is, entertains me far more agreeably than Dickens. I know very well that the author of "David Copperfield" was a greater artist than the

author of "MR. POLLY," just as I know that the Archbishop of Canterbury is a more virtuous man than my good friend, Fred the Bartender; but all the same, I prefer Wells and Fred to Dickens and the Archbishop. In such matters one must allow a lot to individual taste and prejudice.

BUT enough of Wells, that ingenious and diverting, that sly and scientific man. We come now to "THE TWISTED FOOT," by Henry Milner Rideout (*Houghton-Mifflin*, \$1.20), author of the extraordinary "Dragon's Blood," one of the most striking romances of last year. Let it be said at once that "THE TWISTED FOOT" makes a sorry successor to "Dragon's Blood." It is, in fact, an exceedingly commonplace tale, with a hero who falls in love with the heroine's portrait and goes galloping about Malaysia in search of her, a pack of mongrel villains at his heels. Mr. Rideout, of course, tells his story with a good deal of skill, and the hot, dancing atmosphere of the tropics is in it, but his personages have very little reality. We never learn much about the hero. What is he doing in the Far East? Where does he get the funds to finance his rather expensive heroics? And who is the heroine? These questions are insistent and irritating, and the merits of the tale are not sufficient to make us forget them, even for a moment.

It is rather probable, of course, that "THE TWISTED FOOT" will be a greater popular success than "Dragon's Blood," which was scarcely a popular success at all. But Mr. Rideout is a young man of too much promise, a writer of altogether too much skill, to go treading the Indiana path of dalliance. "Dragon's Blood" gave excuse for the belief that he was gaining much from an assiduous study of Conrad, but in "THE TWISTED FOOT" the Conrad influence is less noticeable than that of Richard Harding Davis. Let Mr. Rideout go back to "Nostromo" and "Lord Jim"; his talents are too rare to be wasted upon the manufacture of best sellers.

"KILMENY OF THE ORCHARD," by L. M. Montgomery, author of "Anne of Green Gables" and "Anne of Avonlea" (*Page*, \$1.25), is an unpretentious little love story of the North. Eric Marshall, a young Nova Scotian, goes out into the backwoods to take a hack at school teaching as substitute for an old friend whose doctor has ordered him to lay up for repairs. One day, passing an orchard, Eric hears beautiful music coming from among the trees, and quite naturally climbs the fence to investigate. Within sits a girl of 18 or so, playing a violin. She is a very pretty girl, and Eric tries to be polite to her, but she drops her violin and runs away without a word. She is Kilmeny Gordon—and she is dumb! But she can hear well enough, particularly when Eric comes a-wooing, and it breaks her heart to refuse him. "When I can speak like other women," she writes upon her tablet, "I will marry you."

Does that time ever come? It certainly does, or there would be no romance. One day Kilmeny's foster-brother, Neil Gordon, a good-for-nothing fellow, sneaks up to Eric and essays to brain him with an axe. Kilmeny sees—and shrieks. And then: "Oh, Eric, I can speak—I can speak! Oh, it is so wonderful! Eric, I love you—I love you!" A pleasant and cleanly little book.

"LADY MERTON, COLONIST," by Mrs. Humphrey Ward (*Doubleday - Page*, \$1.50), is an ultra-feminine—which means an excessively sentimental—study of the conflict between East and West, civilization and the wilderness, silk lingerie and rough, red, medicated flannel. Specifically, it is the story of Lady Merton, a young English widow of aristocratic lineage and hothouse tastes, who goes out to the Canadian Northwest with a sick brother and there falls in love with George Anderson, the son of a border outlaw. What chance for happiness will there be in a marriage between Lady Merton and Anderson? How will she get on in the wilderness without her beloved Tin-

torettos, her first editions, her Chippendale chairs, her Tudor roses, her daily copy of the *Morning Post*? And how will Anderson pan out as the husband of a civilized woman—Anderson, the son of that melodramatic malefactor, that highwayman, that downright murderer?

Mrs. Ward's answer seems to be the eternal one of the woman novelists. She is apparently firmly convinced that love will find a way; that all conflicts of training and temperament will be stilled by its soft music; that the Andersons will forget, eventually, that they belong to different races and different centuries, almost to different species of the *genus homo*. But it cannot be said that this answer of hers is supported by very impressive evidence. She seems to shirk from a too elaborate investigation of the problem. She merely turns a rose-colored spotlight upon hero and heroine, strikes up a sentimental tune—and then brings down her curtain. It is ladylike; it is sweet; it is even extremely interesting—but it is very far from satisfying. Perhaps—who knows?—we shall have the story of the divorce, of the fight over the impending child, maybe even of the murder of Lady Merton, in a sequel!

Posthumous novels from the pen of the late Marion Crawford have been pouring from the presses ever since his death. Apparently he kept a large stock of manuscripts constantly on hand, ready to profit by every fluctuation and exigency of the market. The last to get between covers, "THE UNDESIRABLE GOVERNESS" (*Macmillan, \$1.50*), is little more than a novelette, but there is so much ingenuity and humor in it that it deserves to be ranked far above some of Mr. Crawford's more pretentious novels. The story is that of a woman, who, for the protection of the susceptible males of her household, seeks a hideously uncharming governess for her young daughters. A girl with frank designs upon one of those males sneaks in in disguise—and thereafter the farce is of harmless foolery and hearty laughter all compact.

It is pleasant to take leave of Mr. Crawford with a smile, and particularly so since that smile is not at him this time, but with him.

"A MODERN CHRONICLE," by Winston Churchill (*Macmillan, \$1.50*), is an attempt at a full length study of a woman—a woman with all the innocent unmorality of her sex. Honora Leffingwell is a young Westerner, who comes East with a design of getting on in the world, and for some five hundred pages we observe her doing so over the corpses of her slain. It is impossible, with any fairness or intelligibility, to summarize so deliberate and elaborate a narrative. There is little of the dramatic in it; it is rather a slow moving panorama, a picture of a gradually unfolding personality. Serious defects are plentiful throughout the book, but if we grant Mr. Churchill his philosophy and his manner, it must be admitted that he has constructed a story which does honor to both, a story with strong sincerity in it and showing considerable skill.

THAT eternally fascinating devil, the war correspondent, figures as hero in two of the current novels. In both of them he is an American; in both he toils brilliantly for an English newspaper; and in both he falls afoul of those blood letting Russians. The name he bears, in "THE RED SYMBOL," by John Ironside (*Little-Brown, \$1.50*), is Maurice Wynn, and he tells his story himself. Believe me, friends, that story will keep you awake! Cold chills will go running up and down your vertebræ; your heart will stand still; your teeth will chatter like a kinetoscope; your face will turn a greenish, unearthly white! Imagine Maurice's horror when he sees his best girl slain before his very eyes by barbarous Cossacks! And imagine his joy when he finally gets back to England and discovers that she was not his best girl at all, but his best girl's twin sister! Of such electric situations is this romance made up—of such brain numbing, soul staggering, mind mauling events.

In "ROUTLEDGE RIDES ALONE," by Will Levington Comfort (*Lippincott*, \$1.50), you will find fewer shocks, but a great many more human beings. The chief of the latter are Routledge, the dashing young American correspondent; Jerry Cardinegh, an elderly Irishman in the same trade, and Jerry's fair young daughter, Noreen. Routledge, of course, loves little Noreen, and Jerry, of course, hates the English—and that's how the tale begins. It is a tale with a good deal of vigor and color in it, a tale which leads us tearing around the world, from Charing Cross to Shanghai and from Shanghai to the Afghan border, and introduces us to the serpentine Russian, the short-legged Nipponeese and the wall-eyed Chinee. Why anyone should care to write such tales is rather beyond me, but it is certainly something to do it as well as Mr. Comfort does it.

FROM murder to mirth! Nine rollicking yarns of the cow country make up "A HAPPY FAMILY," by B. M. Bowef (*Dillingham*, \$1.50), and in all of them Ananias Green, that Sandow of liars, is the star. Do I hear my sensitive conscience suggest that the humor is often laid on with a shovel? Well, then, let it be a shovel, hand or steam—so long as it provokes the honest and health giving guffaw!

Back to crime again! It appears in "THE HEART OF DESIRE," by Elizabeth Dejeans (*Lippincott*, \$1.50), toward the middle of the book, and spoils an otherwise harmless and even elevating love story. That story has a hero who loves one girl for no less than fifteen years on end—a hero, you must admit, of quite extraordinary assiduity. Let Miss Dejeans avoid melodrama in her future compositions. She is at her best when she is farthest from it.

A DEFT compound of Jules Verne and Richard Harding Davis is to be found in "THE SKY MAN," by Henry Kitchell Webster (*Century Co.*, \$1.20). Philip Cayley, Lieutenant, U. S. A., is the sky man. His false friend, Lieutenant Perry Hunter, has accused him of a

crime of which he is innocent, and he has been turned out of the army in disgrace. But does he commit suicide, or become an evangelist, or change his name and enter the newspaper business? Not at all. Instead, he makes him a pair of wings, hooks them to his back, gives them a couple of flaps—and goes sailing away toward the North Pole!

The girl, of course, arrives on schedule time, and in the orthodox yacht. How Cayley falls in love with her, how he and she are lost in the arctic snow waste and spend months together battling with the bitter cold, and how, in the end, sweet Jeanne, "with a sudden passion of understanding, clasps him close and kisses him," and he puts aside his wings forever and comes back to the United States and is acquitted of that false charge and settles down, let us hope, as an honest married man, with no more yearning to roam—all of this and much more we either learn or deduce from Dr. Webster's diverting pages.

Another arctic romance is "THE LAND OF FROZEN SUNS," by Bertrand W. Sinclair (*Dillingham*, \$1.50). Here we have the story of a battle against that king octopus, the Hudson Bay Company, with love making added for good measure. Mr. Sinclair's narrative passages show simplicity and skill, but his dialogue is sometimes labored and his characters have not much reality.

Folk without any reality whatever are to be found in "THE BROKEN WHEEL," by Florence Land May (*Clark*, \$1.50). The tale deals with the carnival of graft which entertained San Francisco after the earthquake, and Abe Reuf, Schmitz and the other grafters appear under transparent aliases. Like most novels "founded on fact," it is extremely amateurish and inclined to be tedious.

More "facts" are to be found in "JOHN HOLDEN, UNIONIST," by T. C. De Leon (*Dillingham*, \$1.50), and the author sometimes stops to assure us in a footnote that they are accurate. Let us hope so. As for the story itself, it is a Civil War tale showing rather more

skill in the telling than the usual Southern author can muster.

"THE RUNNING FIGHT," by William Hamilton Osborne (*Dodd-Mead*, \$1.50), is the chronicle of an immoral and cynical millionaire's battle with the law. Peter V. Wilkinson is his name, and milking trust companies is his trade. One day a humorous judge sentences him to ten years at hard labor—and Peter suddenly realizes that his trade has become perilous. But the dungeons yawn for him in vain. He fights like a wolt, like a jackal, like a hyena; and when finally it is seen that only a pardon can save him, and the Governor of New York refuses to grant it, that gentleman is chased out of office, and one of Peter's own minions is elected in his place. As payment for the pardon, which is now courteously granted, the minion is to get \$1,000,000 in cash and the hand of Peter's beautiful daughter, Leslie. But poetic justice blocks his felonious cashing-in. Peter, in a word, hasn't the money to pay up, for he has transferred all his opulence to Leslie for safe keeping—and Leslie, the little minx, marries the moral ex-Governor and bids the minion go hang!

A powerful and complex fiction. A tale without the slightest stain of plausibility. Mr. Osborne, let it be admitted, has made some progress in the art of composition since writing "The Red Mouse," but it will be a long while, I fear, before he becomes a serious rival to George Meredith.

Better stuff is to be found in "STUDIES IN WIVES," by Mrs. Belloc Lowndes (*Kennerley*, \$1.50), a book of six short stories. In most of them the note is tragic, and in a few it is positively horrible; but in all of them one observes the sure hand of a practised and accomplished fictioneer. The best of the stories is "According to Meredith," an account of a trial marriage's unexpected termination. Mrs. Lowndes has a sort of grim, ironic humor; she knows how to give her characters reality; she is well worth reading.

In "THE FASCINATING MRS. HALTON," by E. F. Benson (*Doubleday-PAGE*, \$1.50), an unending stream of amusing dialogue must make up for the lack of sterner qualities. The book is a novelization of Mr. Benson's play, "Aunt Jeannie," which Mrs. Patrick Campbell tackled ingloriously a few years ago. It tells the story of a young widow who attempts to save her niece from an unwise marriage by directing her highly agreeable animal magnetism at the bridegroom-elect.

Another novelization is C. L. Dazey's famous play, "IN OLD KENTUCKY," by Edward Marshall (*Dillingham*, \$1.50). Mr. Marshall has lifted the ancient melodrama far out of its class by putting good writing and a touch of poetry into it.

TIME flies, and the procession of novels is endless. I must be brief with the lesser ones. Of such sort are "COMMENCEMENT DAYS," a pleasant little tale of college life for girls by Virginia Church (*Page*, \$1.50); "THE EARLY BIRD," a story of love and business, with plenty of movement in it and told in George Randolph Chester's brisk manner (*Bobbs-Merrill*, \$1.50); "THE DILEMMA," a grim and powerful study of growing insanity by that marvelous Russian, Leonidas Andreieff (*Brown*, \$1.00); "YET SPEAKETH HE" (*Sherman-French*, 80 cents), and "I CHOOSE" (*Sherman-French*, \$1.00), a pair of stories of strong ethical purpose by Gertrude Capen Whitney; "AN AMERICAN BABY ABROAD," an original and amusing chronicle of travel by Mrs. Charles N. Crewdson, with illustrations by R. F. Outcault and Modest Stein (*Little-Brown*, \$1.50), and "THE RED FLAG," a study of the struggle between capital and labor in Alsace-Lorraine, by Georges Ohnet (*Dillingham*, \$1.50).

Of such sort, too, are "A SAINT OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY," by Fannie Bond Rice, a prohibition romance with a Methodist mad mullah as hero; "JUST BETWEEN THEMSELVES," by Anne Warner (*Little-Brown*, \$1.50), an account of the amusing adventures of

a crowd of Americans in Germany; "ROSAMOND THE SECOND," by Mary Mears (*Stokes*, \$1.25), with a scientific villain-hero-comedian who fits wax dummies with cerebrums, and is tempted to proceed to the manufacture of a large, artificial harem; "THE VOICE IN THE RICE," by Gouverneur Morris (*Dodd-Mead*, \$1.25), the story of a forgotten feudal oligarchy, hidden in the rice fields of the Carolinas, with a copious supply of lords and ladies; and "THE GLORY OF HIS COUNTRY," a dramatic and effective tale of war and patriotism by Frederick Landis (*Scribner's*, \$1.25), with the promise in it of even better work to come.

FINALLY come three books of short stories—"THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF LUTHER TRANT," by Edwin Balmar and William McHarg (*Small-Maynard*, \$1.50); "JUST HORSES," by Sewell Ford (*Kennerley*, \$1.00); and "MONTES THE MATADOR," by Frank Harris (*Kennerley*, \$1.00). Luther Trant is a Sherlock Holmes of a new sort—an experimental psychologist who examines witnesses and suspects with the galvanometer, the chronoscope, the pneumograph, the plethysmograph, the automatograph, the cardiograph and all the other devilish machines of the psychological laboratory. Guilt, transformed into physiological irregularities, appears on a sheet of paper as a zigzag line; innocence is as straight as an arrow. The stories, in brief, have a good deal of novelty in them.

Mr. Ford's book is a companion volume to "Horses Nine," and has the same charm for horse lovers. The author writes with a light touch and is always entertaining. Mr. Harris, on the contrary, is solemn and a bore. The five stories in his book are all bad.

A BOOK of curious interest is "THE NEW WORD," by Allen Upward (*Kennerley*, \$1.50). Who Upward may be I'm sure I don't know, but he is plainly a fellow with ideas in him, and he sets them forth in an unusually entertaining manner. The "new word" that he presumes to define in upward of

three hundred pages is "idealism." What does it mean? Mr. Upward answers that it means a sort of gospel of hope—of hope borrowed in equal proportions from the materialism of today and the supernaturalism of yesterday. He is trying to prove, in brief, that an elaborate *science* of living is not enough to make mankind happy—that an *art* of life is needed, too. His proof is as discursive as a chapter in Rabelais, and as ornate with outlandish learning. Incidentally, he falls into an error that nearly all critics of modern materialism make: he loses sight, at times, of the enormous difference between a scientific theory and a scientific fact.

If you love Thackeray's "The Four Georges"—and who doesn't?—you will be interested in "IN THE DAYS OF THE GEORGES," a large and ornate book by William B. Boulton, an authority upon the England of the eighteenth century (*Pott*, \$3.00). The volume is made up of six essays, each complete in itself, but all reeking with the flavor of the old coffee houses, the old gaming clubs, the old peacock parades. One tells in sixty pages the strange story of George Brummel, that incomparable beau and deadbeat; another discusses the ancient legend of George III's youthful marriage with Hannah Lightfoot, alias Wheeler, alias Axford, a fair and mysterious Quakeress; yet another is an interesting and searching study of the character of Charles Fox, gambler, gallant and politician. Mr. Boulton reveals on every page his mastery of his material. He is one who knows the gay Georgians intimately and senses their point of view; and in the writing of his book he strikes the happy mean between historical romance and bloodless, scientific history.

"A SPLENDID HAZARD," by Harold McGrath (*Bobbs-Merrill*, \$1.50), is a sort of encyclopedia of coincidences. It is a coincidence that John Fitzgerald the American and Karl Breitmann are both ardent admirers of Napoleon I; another that the two dine together in Paris next to Admiral Killebrew and

his beauteous daughter; another that they meet again at the Admiral's home in New Jersey; yet another that the Admiral and M. Anatole Ferraud, the French secret agent, are both interested in butterflies; yet another that the Admiral and Fitzgerald's father were once firm friends; yet another that the Admiral is steeped in pirate lore, and in consequence, ripe for a search for lost treasure. Take away the incredible coincidences, and little remains of the book save the preposterous illustrations of Howard Chandler Christy. The story itself is of the flimsiest. The lost treasure, we discover, was buried by early Bonapartists, in the hope that it might one day finance a Restoration—and Karl Breitmann, the German, is the last of the genuine Bonapartes, for his great-grandmother was a complaisant Bavarian peasant girl, and his great-grandfather was none other than the Little Corporal himself. Altogether it is a mechanical and exasperating story, badly imagined and atrociously written—a story of true best seller cut, with not a single merit that I have been able to discover.

#### OBERAMMERGAU—

by Josephine Helena Short.  
(*Crowell, \$1.00*)

An excellent little guide book to the Passion Play, with intimate glimpses of village life in Oberammergau and many good illustrations.

#### IN AMBER LANDS—

by Tom McInnes.  
(*Broadway Pub. Co., \$1.25*)

The very original and interesting strophes of a Canadian bard. Now and then Mr. McInnes is commonplace, but more often—as in a poem called "Broken Days," for example—he shows that he has something to say and that he knows how to say it.

#### MY OWN PHILOSOPHY—

by Werner Eggerth.  
(*Donnelley, \$1.50*)

The tedious rhapsodies and dramas of a bucolic bard.

#### REVOLUTION—

by Jack London.  
(*Macmillan, \$1.50*)

A collection of miscellaneous essays ranging in character from a silly Socialist harangue, praising violence, to amateurish ventures into criticism. The best of them is Mr. London's answer to a Certain Person's charge that he is a nature faker. Poor stuff.

#### THE BUTTERFLY MAN—

by George Barr McCutcheon.  
(*Dodd-Mead, \$1.25*)

An account of an attractive young scoundrel who bluffs his way through society until he is finally found out and dropped—with an extra hard thump. Handsomely illustrated.

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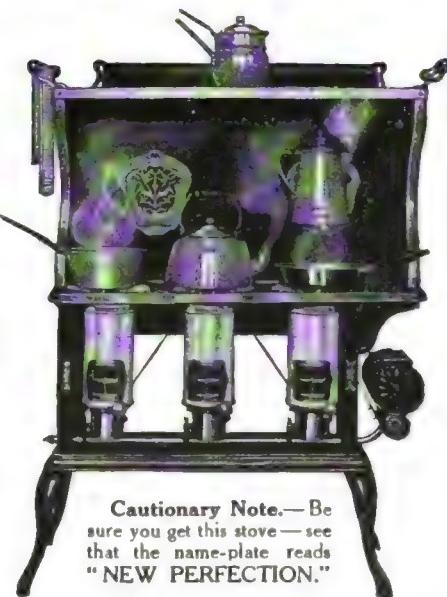
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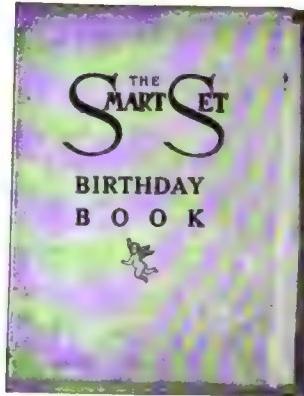
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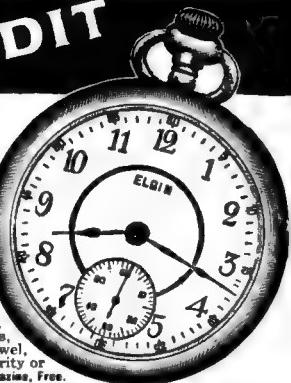
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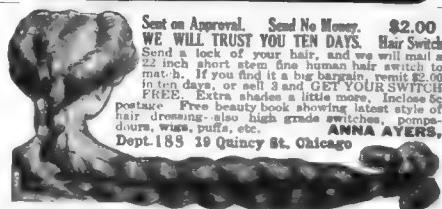
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